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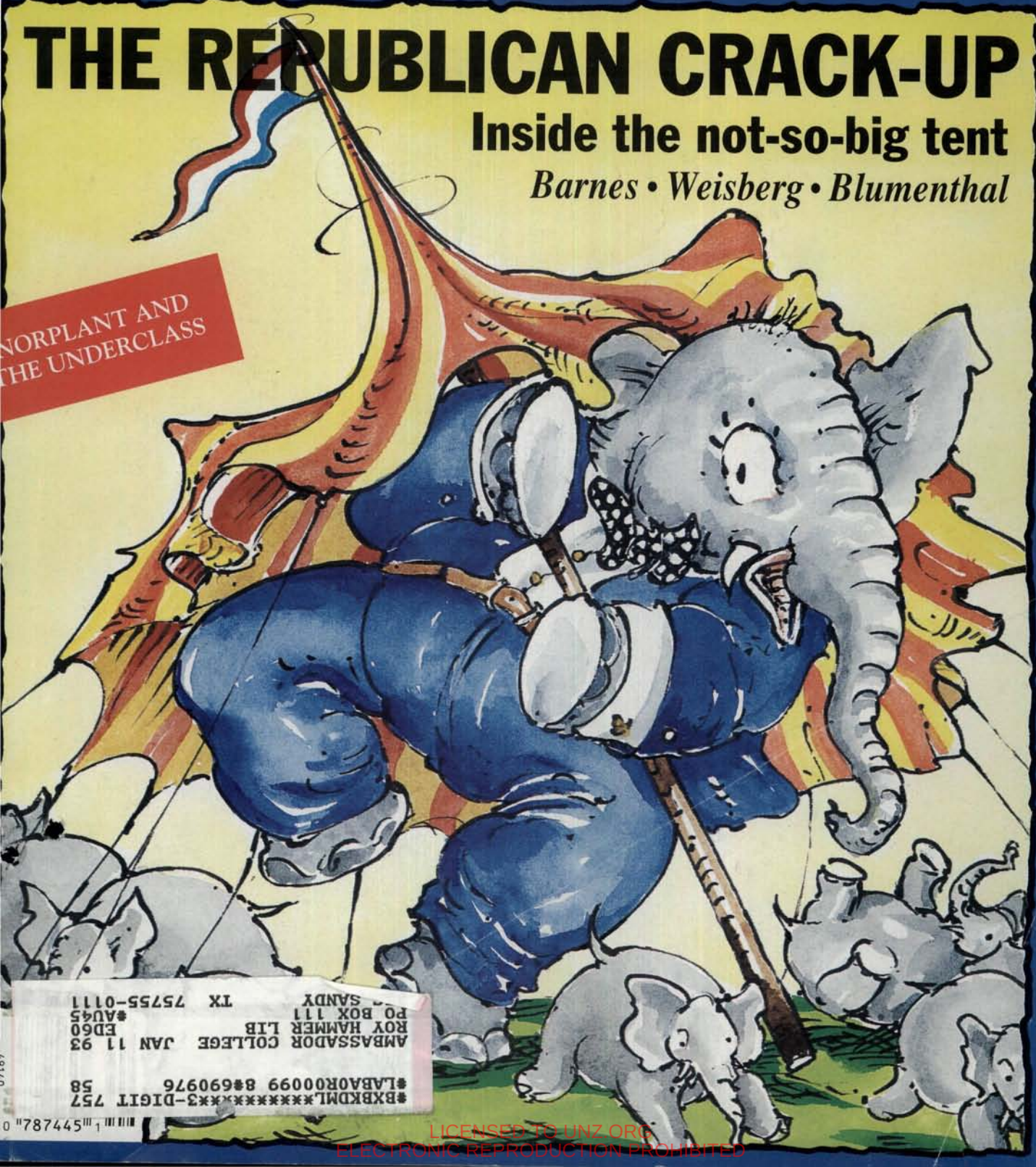

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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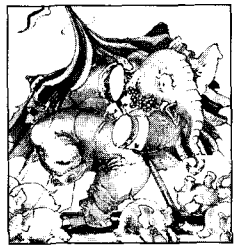

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FROM WASHINGTON

The B List

Well, I didn't make the list. Did you? According to a special report on CNN, the government has a secret list of people who will succeed to the presidency in case of nuclear war. The official list prescribed by law and the Constitution—call it the A List—begins with the vice president and descends through the Speaker of the House, the President pro tem of the Senate, and fourteen Cabinet officers, ending with the secretary of veterans affairs in seventeenth place.

But there is apparently another list, a B List, that begins with No. 18 and runs who knows how far. According to CNN, it has at times included such people as former United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, former White House chief of staff Howard Baker, and former CIA Director Richard Helms. All of them refused to comment to CNN, but they are undoubtedly feeling rather smug. In Washington, being secretly in line for the presidency is sure to become the newest status symbol.

According to CNN, the plan to install what it calls "the Doomsday Government" was created by the Reagan administration in 1982 and entrusted to a secret agency with the wonderfully deadpan name "National Program Office." Oliver North was intimately involved, wouldn't you know. "National Program Office" does not sound like the kind of thing Ronald Reagan ought to approve of, though that could be deliberate, to put people off the scent. More satisfactory sci-fi vibes are given off by the actual name of the B List itself: the "Presidential Successor Support System," or "PS-cubed" for short. So far, says CNN, PS-cubed has cost the taxpayers $8 billion.

The CNN report was most alarmed about the constitutional implications of a secret line of succession, unknown and unapproved by the body politic. But how worrisome is that? After all, the connection between democracy and the official, non-secret line of succession is pretty attenuated. Or did you consider Manuel Lujan's qualifications to be president when you voted for your senator, who voted to confirm him as secretary of ... well, as secretary of whatever he is?

More interesting are the questions of how Ollie North and Company came up with their list of potential presidents, and who is on it. Making lists of names is a favorite occupation of the power-mad. Sometimes these are lists you want to be on, such as those determining who gets invited to a party or who wins a National Medal of Freedom or who gets selected as the ABC "Person of the Week." Sometimes they are lists you'd just as soon not be on, for example, who cleans up the kitchen or who has to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee or who gets executed by Stalin. But the list-maker can take pleasure in either type. Whether for good or evil, the opportunity to exert power by inclusion and exclusion is the same.

I suppose being on the list of who gets to become president of the United States after a nuclear holocaust lies somewhere in between the two categories in terms of desirability. It's like a party you wish to have it known you were invited to but are not particularly eager to attend. Or maybe it's like not being invited to the party itself but being told you can come around the next day and eat the leftovers.

Reagan's commitment to keeping the federal government going under any circumstance is touching. You would have thought that, for a true conservative, one of the bright spots of a nuclear holocaust would be the cessation of the government. Sort of the ultimate in term limits. Is a list of seventeen successors to the president not long enough? That is exactly the sort of bureaucratic mentality Reagan claimed to oppose.

In its report CNN interviewed a source identified only as "Bob." Bob was said to be "knowledgeable." And according to Bob, "In some cases, it may be necessary to even go outside of the active current government to bring in that expertise in a period of crisis." Good old Bob has stumbled onto the perennial dream of good-government types: that, in a crisis, the nation will reach out to Father Theodore Hesburgh (or is it Lee Iacocca? Felix Rohatyn? George Will? Magic Johnson?) to take command. What a pity it will take a nuclear catastrophe to bring America to its senses.

CNN does not report how long the B list is. But clearly there is no logical stopping point. If seventeen successors to the president are insufficient, so are thirty-four or sixty-eight or 136. To do this thing right, the National Program Office would have to rank the entire population from one to 250 million in terms of each person's qualifications to be president. It's not easy. Sure, it starts out a snap. But after you've slotted Bill Moyers in No. 1 and Willie Horton in No. 250,000,000 (and no furlough even then), you still have to face that vast middle ground. Does my Aunt Evelyn come before or after your Uncle Benny? Does Madonna outrank Arthur Schlesinger Jr.? And don't forget yourself, Ollie. You squeeze right in there between Pee-wee Herman and Orrin Hatch.

In *The New York Times*, Duke law professor William van Alstyne points out another problem with the B List. Since it's secret, how will you prove that your number has come up? It would be like winning the lottery but losing the ticket. As the *Times* states the dilemma: "Who ... would believe an obscure figure claiming to be president under a top-secret plan no one had ever heard of?" For myself, I wouldn't even believe Jeane Kirkpatrick or Howard Baker.

Obviously the solution is to make the list public. And, just to be sure, we should tattoo every American citizen with his or her Presidential Succession Number (PSN). That way, survivors stumbling through the wreckage of American civilization would merely have to compare numbers to know who should take orders from whom.

As nuclear war becomes a more distant possibility, though, the real significance of the B List is here and now. For prestige, there's been nothing like it since Nixon's Enemies List. In fact, this is the Enemies List in reverse. It can be only a matter of time before lobbyists are offering to get your name on the presidential succession list and p.r. firms are offering to promote your presence on it, whether truthfully or not.

Come to think of it, I may have been hasty in admitting that I am not on the list. Keep in mind that that may have been disinformation. Naturally, anyone who is on such a list would be required to pretend otherwise, whereas anyone left off would be sorely tempted to bluff. Be nice to me and I'll make you ambassador to Afghanistan. After a nuclear war, that could be one of the more desirable postings.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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Sacrificing Accuracy for Diversity

By Albert Shanker
President of the American Federation of Teachers

We're in the midst of an important change in our school curriculum. By including the contributions of many different groups that have not previously been recognized, we're trying to make a multicultural curriculum that accurately reflects our society.

However, some groups, including the New York State Board of Regents, which has just accepted guidelines for a new social studies curriculum, may end up sacrificing accuracy for diversity. They seem to think that, in order to give kids varied points of view, it is perfectly O.K. to teach ideas and theories that few or no reputable scholars accept. The Regents' proposal calls this using "noncanonical knowledge and techniques" and "nondominant knowledge sources."

You can see some good examples of what's wrong with this idea in the Portland (Oregon) "African-American Baseline Essays." This mini-curriculum, made up of essays on social studies, science, language arts, mathematics, art and music, has been adopted or used as a model by school systems all over the country.

The Portland essays present ancient Egypt as an African culture that strongly influenced the development of European civilization, and this is fair enough. It's a view most reputable scholars have agreed with for 40 years, and it corrects distortions of previous historians who were inclined to ignore Egypt's contribution or to disregard the fact that Egypt was an African civilization. But the baseline essays go far beyond discussing Egypt as an African society, and they assert a number of ideas that are inconsistent with the best scholarship. For instance, they maintain that the inhabitants of ancient Egypt were black Africans.

Kids who are fed this kind of thing are not getting an alternative perspective; they are being cheated.

Scholars of Egyptian history and archeology say that the evidence suggests an entirely different story. Far from being all black (or all white), ancient Egypt, they say, was a multiracial society with a variety of racial types much like that of modern Egypt. In any case, our concept of race—a relatively modern invention—would not have made much sense to ancient Egyptians, who did not look at people in terms of skin color or hair texture. So the baseline essays not only misrepresent the evidence by insisting that Egypt was a black African society; they distort the example that Egypt has to offer our own multiracial society to make a political point.

The science section of the baseline essays reveals the same preference for politics over scholarship. The ancient Egyptians' excellence in mathematics, medicine and astronomy is widely acknowledged. For example, we owe our 365-day, 12-month year to them. But kids who learn science from this baseline essay will be told that the Egyptians developed the theory of evolution (thousands of years before Darwin), understood quantum physics and flew around for business and pleasure in full-size gliders—all stuff that no serious scientist believes for a minute. We used to laugh at the Soviets for saying that baseball and everything else of any importance had been discovered or invented in the USSR. These claims for Egyptian science are no more credible, and they are equally political in nature; they are propaganda rather than science. But this is not the biggest problem.

The science baseline essay presents as science stuff that is no more scientific than the Ouija board or mediums or the horoscope in the daily newspaper. Although the essay says it's important to distinguish between science and magic, it treats magic like a legitimate part of science. Kids whose teachers follow the Portland curriculum will be told that the Egyptians could to predict lucky and unlucky days with the help of "astropsychological treatises"; and they'll hear how the Egyptians' highly developed "human capabilities" allowed them to see events before they happened ("precognition") or at a distance ("remote viewing"). Ideas like these make good subjects for movies or TV series, but they have nothing to do with science. Kids who are fed this kind of thing are not getting an alternative perspective; they are being cheated.

School boards and teachers accept the legitimacy of what's said in the baseline essays because they assume that the writers have solid credentials—and the introduction to the essays plays along with this. The writer of the science essay is described as a "Research Scientist of Argonne National Laboratories, Chicago," implying that the essay was written by a top-notch scientist, perhaps with the endorsement of a federally funded lab. But it turns out that the writer is not a scientist at all. According to Argonne, he's an industrial-hygiene technician with a high school diploma whose job is collecting air samples.

We all want to improve the achievement of our students. And poor, minority children, whose performance still lags far behind that of white, middle-class kids, deserve the best education we can give them. They're not going to get it if we substitute myths for history or magic for science. Here's how Frank Snowden, a professor emeritus of classics at Howard University, puts it:

> Many students already have been misled and confused by Afrocentrists' inaccuracies and omissions in their treatment of blacks in the ancient Mediterranean world. The time has come for Afrocentrists to cease mythologizing and falsifying the past. The time has come for scholars and educators to insist upon scholarly rigor and truth in current and projected revisions of our curriculum. *Tempus fugit!*

MR. SHANKER'S COMMENTS APPEAR IN THIS AD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS. READER CORRESPONDENCE IS INVITED. ADDRESS YOUR LETTERS TO MR. SHANKER AT THE AFT, 555 NEW JERSEY AVE., N.W., WASHINGTON, DC 20001. ©1991 BY ALBERT SHANKER.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Rapped

To the editors:

As a reporter who routinely covers rap concerts, albums, and trends for *The Pittsburgh Press*, I feel compelled to correct many of the erroneous assumptions made in David Samuels's less-than-sympathetic piece, "The Rap on Rap" (November 11). Sure, there are more white kids than ever enjoying the sounds of hip-hop and rap. And many of them are attracted by the hard-core street attitudes displayed by acts like N.W.A. and the Geto Boys. But in his rush to complete the thesis—and turn it to indict the entire rap community—Mr. Samuels ignores the similar chart-topping success of more mainstream groups like M. C. Hammer, Tone Loc, and Young M.C. Each of these artists has had No. 1 hits and albums, and none of them adopts the hard-nosed street attitudes of the earlier groups. It's as if someone took a look at Bon Jovi or Debbie Gibson and tried to say they represent the whole of rock music.

Mr. Samuels's assertion that rap is not real music apes the attitude European slave traders took upon "discovering" Africa and hearing the native, rhythm-based songs. Because the sounds contrasted so strongly to their cultural forms, Europeans assumed what they heard was not music. Perhaps the author chooses to think rap is the "black music that isn't either," but I prefer a less demeaning and less racially insensitive view. My view says white and black kids are making a connection through rap that others made through blues, jazz, and rock 'n' roll—and it's breaking down barriers.

ERIC DEGGANS
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

To the editors:

I'm not yet a smart enough writer to find the word "tinpot" in any dictionary that either I or anyone in my family owns. For my benefit, I'd like to suggest that the next time David Samuels writes a goofy, simplistic, incompletely analyzed piece about hip-hop he either write more clearly or quote me exactly and *thoroughly*, much the same way he quoted, often incoherently, Jon Shecter, Hank Shocklee, and "white rap traditionalist" MC Serch.

Actually, though used to being called names by people I suspect of practicing racism, I am neither a "sometime critic," nor a "tinpot racist." I am a hip-hop activist, media assassin, and victim of white supremacy, the only form of racism that is functional on this mostly non-white planet. I am so smart a writer that when I construct, insulate, and fortify my "diatribes," Princeton Mellon Fellows, perhaps hoping to pen the "anti-Semitic" tail on the donkey, can do no more than dumbly draw such a limp conclusion as "Harry Allen . . . pointed out that Shecter is Jewish."

Mr. Shecter *is* Jewish, much the way that Elektra's Beth Jacobson, to quote Mr. Samuels, is a "white Jewish publicist," much the way that Rick Rubin, to quote Mr. Samuels, is a "Jewish punk rocker."

HARRY ALLEN
New York, New York

Strength to hate

To the editors:

Jonathan Rauch's thoughtful warning of the dangerous folly of punishing "Thought Crimes" (October 7) reminded me of the distinction made by Martin Luther King Jr. in *Strength to Love*. "Morality cannot be legislated," King wrote, "but behavior can be regulated. Judicial decrees may not change the heart, but they can restrain the heartless." People have a right to think as they like, but they have no right to injure others.

STEVEN J. NOVAK
Los Angeles, California

Breathless

To the editors:

I want to take issue with my friend Abigail Thernstrom's article "Rough Justice" (November 11). She seems quite persuaded that Anita Hill, whom she admits to knowing little about, was "an unwitting tool for the nation's most organized thought police." Ms. Thernstrom discredits Ms. Hill based on the incredibility of "experts" called by the press—not Ms. Hill—such as Catharine MacKinnon. And of all things—the polls! Since when are the polls arbiters of truth? Ms. Hill's testimony, Ms. Thernstrom says, was weak because her four witnesses could testify only that "*she* said something had happened. No one could say anything actually did occur." Right, but in almost all cases of sexual harassment, the events occur in private and so no one other than the participants *can* say something happened. This doesn't mean they *don't* happen.

Then we jump to, "Why would she come forth with an untrue story?" (Think: unwitting tool of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.) Ms. Thernstrom acknowledges we don't know enough to answer that question. But is that the right question? Better perhaps, "Why did she come forth with *this* story?" That Thomas has been in the public eye for ten years and Anita Hill hasn't hardly makes her guilty of making up a story or being a stooge. Basic facts *are* unclear, but the basic facts of Anita Hill's job history and her politics should have little to do with whether she was sexually harassed.

The fact that his and her politics are so entwined with his and her story of sexual harassment raises an interesting issue. These two people have served as a Rorschach test for the nation. A Rorschach is a psychological test where suggestive abstract black figures are symmetrically mirrored on a white background. The intent is to "read in" a story when viewing the cards. I believe we did just that. Those who wanted Thomas on the Court saw Hill as lying; those who didn't, believed her. We see what we see through the lens of personal experience. In this case it seems that Ms. Thernstrom, to make her political point, has dismissed with insufficient evidence other perspectives. But perhaps this is the fate of all those involved in politics.

ANNE L. PERETZ
Cambridge, Massachusetts

To the editors:

I have just finished reading "Rough Justice" and am appalled that it appeared in your magazine. Ms. Thernstrom's attack on the civil rights establishment (and others) for its conduct during the Clarence Thomas episode may or may not be well founded, but its screeching, breathless tone and frequent resort to sarcasm and innuendo—"left-liberals," "the biased major networks," "black men . . . they can't help themselves"—are what I expect to read in *Wall Street Journal* editorials, not in your distinguished pages. What on earth were you thinking of?

RUSSELL PITTMAN
Takoma Park, Maryland

To the editors:

Sidney Blumenthal (Washington Diarist, "The Higher Hustle," November 11) takes Peggy Noonan to task for her rhetorical abuses in her recent op-ed piece in *The New York Times*. In particular, he accuses her of attempting to "discern the absolute truth of the [Thomas] affair in the makeup of the female witnesses." Actually, all Ms. Noonan really tried to do was account for the widespread public perception that Clarence Thomas got a "bum ride."

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

DECEMBER 9, 1991

BREAKING THE CODE

There can have been few more satisfying sights in America last week than the view of David Duke reading about his electoral defeat in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune.* There's no cause, however, for jubilation. Duke won a full 40 percent of the vote, a clear majority of the white vote and a landslide among white Protestants in a state that has historically rejected appeals to naked racism. And the massive black turnout in this particular election may not be duplicated in other states at other times. We're skeptical about the chances of Mr. Duke having a powerful influence on the next presidential election, but there's no doubt that Dukism—the racist exploitation of legitimate concerns—is now a semi-permanent feature of American politics. It was center stage in 1988. It will head the bill in 1992.

The blame for this, since Mr. Duke's defeat, has been placed in a variety of not-so-convincing places. The poor economy has been cited as the reason for increasing racial tension, and though there's no doubt that a connection exists here, it's a catalyst, not a cause. There are plenty of places where the slump has not generated the same passions; and these passions, where they have been expressed, have tended to be phrased not simply in terms of economic distress, but in terms of policies such as affirmative action and welfare that exist in good times as well as bad and have been electorally powerful for decades.

Much blame lies with the Bush administration. The White House has consistently dealt with the issue of race in what we can only describe as a culpably cynical manner. It has alternated between Mr. Bush's patronizing noblesse oblige toward the lower orders and his advisers' sporadic "quota" posturing. The administration lacks even the clarity of purpose of its predecessor, which at least believed what it said on the matter of race, and in large part acted upon it. The Bush administration has besmirched even brave decisions—the nomination of a black conservative to the Supreme Court—by miring them in the politics of cynicism and hardball. How else explain the initial muzzling of Justice Thomas in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee and then the use of racial victimology to secure his eventual success? How else account for the pragmatic capitulation on the Civil Rights Act, after a year of allegedly principled opposition? When liberals attack this administration as engaging in the same opportunism as David Duke, we can only conclude that they are essentially right. And one of the bright spots of Mr. Duke's defeat is that such politics will now have to be conducted with a mixture of embarrassment and shame.

But the blame for Mr. Duke must be shared by the Democrats, whose cowardice on the matter of race is as profound as Mr. Bush's cynicism. As the civil rights lobby has moved decisively in favor of policies that actively discriminate on the basis of race, very few voices in the Democratic Party have felt able to articulate the qualms of most Americans. Affirmative action—a policy of contentious moral grounding and of increasingly controversial social impact—is opposed by the vast majority of Americans and is increasingly contended among the minorities it seeks to assist. Yet any dissension from it within Democratic ranks is too often regarded as pandering to the politics of David Duke. The racial gerrymandering now being enforced in the electoral makeup of many major cities is encouraged. The attempted imposition of a racially based curriculum in many American high schools and the now-entrenched ethnic quotas in the universities are greeted with virtual silence by most of the Democratic leadership. This is not surprising: the position of the Democrats on these issues is as unpopular as it is often insincere. Race has become untouchable among Democrats, as congressional leaders are afraid to defend positions they know are unpopular and that they don't fully believe in themselves. There can have been few more excruciating examples of this than the cowed docility of the Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee during the hearings on Clarence Thomas.

Welfare reform, which gained a mild consensus with the Family Support Act in 1988, is unique among tough, racially tinged issues that the Democrats have come close to grappling with. Indeed, it would not have received even the paltry level of attention it now gets without the work of Democratic Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Many Democratic governors have initiated mild reform schemes, and of the current Democratic field, Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton has made a credible version of

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workfare a central part of his candidacy. But there is as yet lamentably low funding for any initiative equal to the scale of the problem, and few schemes tough enough to make a genuine impact. Worse, there is a tendency among Democrats—we think particularly of the ever opportunistic Mario Cuomo—to claim credit for welfare reform, while pursuing policies that amount to the thinnest of breaks from the past.

Now there are signs that the label of David Duke will be plastered on any Democrat brave enough to confront the issue of race honestly. In a recent interview with columnist Joe Klein, Mr. Cuomo made remarks implying that welfare reform was merely a way to criticize those on welfare. A recent *New York Times* editorial reiterated the point that the "code" of the welfare issue and of affirmative action was largely responsible for the success of Mr. Duke. In an accompanying column, Anthony Lewis cited concerns about reverse discrimination and the welfare underclass as almost self-evidently racist remarks.

This is nonsense. The truth is, David Duke is able cynically to exploit the issues of affirmative action and welfare precisely because Republicans and Democrats are too scared to touch them. But they are real issues, worthy of attention, vital to confront if the seamy milieu of Dukism is not to claim them as its own. Welfare needs reform—more drastic and more expensive than any of the options currently being offered by either Democrats or Republicans. Affirmative action and disparate impact legislation need a searching review in the context of the emergence of the black middle class and the collapsing educational standards of poorer black Americans. Affirmative action remains, in our view, a largely irrelevant and increasingly counterproductive way to address unequal racial opportunity in this country. Any Democrat or Republican who is prepared to take on these issues in a principled fashion is not a racist. He can also be assured of mighty public support. At the very least, these matters need to be discussed as openly and fearlessly among political leaders in this country as they are among people at large. If the lesson we learn from David Duke is that any debate of this kind is mere "code" for bigotry, then we will have given Duke and his followers a victory that the voters of Louisiana just denied him.

BAKER'S ERRAND

Secretary of State James Baker's stern countenance in front of the television cameras in Beijing was an improvement on previous public kowtowing by the administration. But it wasn't entirely sincere. Mr. Baker had one eye on Washington, where Congress is about to pass (and President Bush to veto) legislation that would condition an extension of most favored nation trade status on Chinese policy reversals on trade, human rights, and nuclear proliferation. He got enough promises out of the Chinese to maintain the support of Democratic Senator Max Baucus of Montana, who's the key swing vote needed to sustain a veto and who desperately wants farmers in his state to continue selling wheat to China. But he got no actual change in Chinese policies.

There are good arguments against cutting off MFN: it would hurt Hong Kong and the southern part of China, where capitalism (and pro-democratic sentiment) is strongest, and it would remove our key remaining leverage over the regime: $10 billion of hard currency a year. But at some point, leverage has to be used, or it is not leverage. More than 1,000 people have been jailed since Tiananmen Square, many reportedly have been tortured, and the Chinese refuse to allow the International Red Cross to visit them. China has contracted to sell nuclear-capable short-range missiles to Pakistan (which is probably now a nuclear power, thanks to earlier Chinese assistance) and intermediate-range missiles to Syria. And it has been found selling nuclear processing material both to Algeria and Iran.

For all of his frantic negotiating, Mr. Baker won few concessions on any of these matters. China confirmed that 800 persons on a U.S. list are political prisoners, but released none of them. It reiterated that it would ratify the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, but did not make assurances about sales to any particular country. It said it would abide by (but not sign) the international Missile Technology Control Regime, but reportedly refused to cancel its missile sale to Pakistan. U.S. officials seem to think that China promised that its $200 million sale of M-9 medium-range missiles to Syria won't go through, but they admit that Chinese credibility is low. China also refused to join an international consortium to pressure North Korea to stop its nuclear weapons program.

So what should the United States do? Our advice is to give China one last chance to deliver on the non-proliferation promises it made to Baker and to begin releasing political prisoners. If the president refuses to use MFN as a stick, he should invent other levers such as an international agreement on the granting and withholding of technology transfers to China. Congress should complete work on its all-but-enacted legislation putting tight conditions on MFN extension. Bush will veto, and Congress won't be able to override. That's OK. Next year, if no breakthrough occurs, Congress should vote not to condition MFN status, but to cut it off. And use the issue mercilessly next year against the "foreign policy" president.

NOTEBOOK

BUSHISM OF THE WEEK: "I think I've got to do better in making clear what the message is, and I think I can do better. But I think there's so much noise out there that I've got to figure out how to make it clearer that we are for the things that I have advocated that would help." —The president, elucidating his economic recovery program, February 18

(thanks to Winston Hunter, New York, New York)

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BUSHISM OF THE WEEK, DEP'T. OF ANTIQUITIES: "Your dedication and tireless work with the hostage thing, with Central America, really give me cause for great pride in you and thanks. Get some turkey, George Bush." —Vice President George Bush in a *written* expression of gratitude to Oliver North, circa Thanksgiving 1985. Read by North during his interview with Ted Koppel on "Nightline," October 22, 1991
(thanks to Stephen G. Davis, New York, New York)

BUSHISM OF THE WEEK BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN BUSH: "Don't worry about it. It always looks dark at the bottom of a recovery." —Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, on NBC's "Meet the Press," November 17

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD: Buried deep inside the newsletter of the American Enterprise Institute, at the bottom of the "AEI People" page, the truth about the end of the cold war is revealed:

> Resident scholar Michael A. Ledeen's article, "Leftist Liars and Ideological Suicide" (*American Spectator*, October), described "a systematic campaign to rewrite American history." In "Casey's Final Mission" (*American Spectator*, November), Mr. Ledeen revealed for the first time how the late director of Central Intelligence recruited Mikhail Gorbachev to destroy the Soviet Union from within.

MOI AUSSI: Who says the world learned nothing from the Clarence Thomas affair? Daniel arap Moi, the Kenyan autocrat, has been following the associate justice's recent example by exploiting race when the chips are down. Faced with a growing protest by members of his country's democratic opposition, Moi recently took out after the U.S. ambassador, who advocates democratic reform, calling him a racist. "I have told the U.S. ambassador that the Kenyan government is very unhappy with his personal behavior," Moi said. "That he is an arrogant man with contempt for Africans. His attitude is that of a slave owner." We have just witnessed, it seems, the first high-tech lynching of an uppity dictator. May there be many more.

SPIN CYCLE: You'd think by now that the Bush administration might have gotten some vague clue about the meaning of this year's revolution in the old Soviet Union. But an end to seventy years of Communist dictatorship and to centuries of Russian imperialism does not seem to have impressed itself on our ambassador, Mr. Robert Strauss. "At times," he said recently in Moscow, "the republics remind me of our children when they were growing up and they were teenagers. They thoroughly enjoy their independence until their laundry got dirty and they had to get their laundry done." And will they please turn that awful democratic music down. •

Did 'calenture' kill Maxwell?

LEAP IN THE DARK

By Keith Hindell

Amid all the speculation about the death of media tycoon Robert Maxwell, one possible cause seems to have been overlooked by the Spanish authorities. Could it be that Maxwell was suffering from calenture, an impulse to jump into the sea? Sounds improbable, even laughable, but on the face of it is no more unlikely than some of the other theories advanced, such as suicide and murder. Curiously, calenture does fit some of the facts of Maxwell's death.

Calenture has been part of marine folklore for centuries. It is even mentioned in that most feverish of seafaring yarns, *Moby Dick*: "and perhaps at mid-day, in the fairest weather, with one half-throttled shriek you drop through the transparent air into the summer sea, no more to rise for ever." Of course one can dismiss Herman Melville as simply a romantic storyteller. However, calenture was actually identified by two early French psychologists who said that the term came from the Spanish word for "fever," *calentura*. They described it as a feverish illness that induced a delusion that the sea was green fields. One of them, J. P. Falret, reported in 1839 that these hallucinations occurred in the tropics, in hot, clear, calm weather, and could be of such intensity that seafarers had to be restrained lest they jump into the sea.

In recent times calenture has been studied by Dr. A. D. Macleod, a New Zealand psychiatrist. Sailing on a Port Line refrigerated ship across the Pacific, Macleod interviewed the whole crew of seventy after he experienced the symptoms himself. He found that no fewer than half had at some time felt an impulse to jump off the ship. Various crew members reported that they had had an impulse to "soar" or "fly" from the deck. Others felt "lured," "hypnotically attracted," "supremely infallible," "oblivious to the risk of probable death," and "joyously entranced." One said the feeling was so strong that he never went near the rail; another that he always arranged to be on deck with a shipmate; a third, a 33-year-old electrician, told Macleod that he avoided going on deck unless it was moderately rough. Macleod concluded that though calenture occurs in the tropics, it is not a result of being feverish from sunstroke or infection, nor is it a suicidal urge. It seems to be helped by the forward motion of the ship and is rarely experienced when the vessel is stationary.

As to the prevalence of this psychological condition, Macleod says he can only speculate. He points out that hundreds of mariners are reported as missing at sea

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without any explanation. In a survey of 3,778 deaths at sea conducted by the British National Union of Seamen in 1981, "missing at sea" accounted for 237, some 6 percent of the total over a fourteen-year period. Macleod reckons that calenture may be a "critical and tragic factor in such deaths."

The only contraindication in Macleod's studies is that none of his sample of mariners experienced the symptoms of calenture at night. The crew of *The Lady Ghislaine* reported that their last telephonic contact with Maxwell was at 4:45 a.m., and it's assumed he went overboard before it was light. However, as Maxwell was not found in the sea till late that afternoon he could easily have died in daylight.

We may never know whether Robert Maxwell was suffering from calenture while cruising between Tenerife and Gran Canaria on November 4 and 5, unless of course the pathologists are baffled by the evidence they took from the body. In his prime Maxwell certainly gave the impression that he felt "supremely infallible," if not always "joyously entranced." How else can one explain the crass errors he made with most of his newspapers? Perhaps at dawn, with half-throttled shriek, he merely dropped through the transparent air into the autumn sea, no more to rise for ever.

KEITH HINDELL is a free-lance broadcaster in London.

WARSAW POSTCARD

URBAN BLIGHT

By Anna Husarska

For eight years as the government's spokesman he sold communism to 35 million understandably hostile Poles. Now, with the dexterity only a former Communist might muster, he sells anti-post-communism sprinkled with obscenity to more than half a million avid readers. No wonder Jerzy Urban, editor of the satirical weekly *Nie* (No), told me that he is now happier. He is also a good deal richer: he is said to earn $50,000 per month (the average monthly wage of his co-citizens is $200).

Any foreign journalist covering the martial law period in Poland remembers the only officially provided amusing moments: weekly conferences of the caustic, unscrupulous Urban cynically defending a system in near collapse. He offended his compatriots, responding to hunger marches with the famous "the government will have no problems feeding itself," and when the U.S. government proposed to send powdered milk, he responded with an offer of sleeping bags for New York's homeless. (An underground publication immediately ran a "Classified": "Exchange five bedrooms in central Warsaw for a sleeping bag in New York.")

A mixture of clown and executioner, Urban was at the time the most despised person in Poland, more so than General Jaruzelski himself. Once when his car was stopped to let an official delegation pass, bystanders recognized him and covered the windshield with spit. He was soundly defeated in the June 1989 parliamentary elections that marked the end of communism in Poland and the beginning of various civil liberties—among them free-dom of the press—of which he now takes full advantage.

Until then people loved to hate him. Now they hate to love him. The weekly *Nie* is a peculiar blend of politics and pornography. The editorials are vicious, the language scatological, the cartoons irreverent. The magazine's slant is rabidly anti-Catholic and pro-choice, anti-Walesa and Solidarity. One recent editorial referred to the recent election as an "orgasm of democracy" that led to a deadlock in forming the government: "Even before the election took place, Walesa said he will respect its outcome, providing that the Reds do not win. If we, the Reds, were to win a majority, he will use force against us. He did not mention what force it would be, but probably he meant the force of the muscles of his driver, now turned his secretary of state." Genitalia appear on average once or twice per issue. Recently Urban announced that he is going to launch another magazine: *Nie* for children. He refused to elaborate.

No respected public figure will admit on the record to buying *Nie*, but somehow 700,000 copies get sold every week (up from 100,000 at its inception a year ago), and on a good day, peeping from the journalists' gallery in the Parliament, you can spot half a dozen deputies reading *Nie*—probably fearful of finding their own names.

Their fear is well founded. Earlier this year, after the Senate proposed a bill penalizing abortion with a two-year jail term, *Nie* promised 5 million zlotys (three months' average salary) to a woman who said she could prove that an anti-abortion senator got her pregnant and agreed to her abortion. *Nie* verified the story and published it with enough detail for the ex-future-father to recognize himself—the name was withheld and will not be revealed unless the senator sins again (by voting, that is). The woman claimed her reward.

The favorite target of *Nie* is Lech Walesa, called "the Great Electrician," who is ridiculed for everything from his ungrammatical Polish to his struggles against the legacy of communism. Even his family is not spared. Urban likes to mock Mrs. Walesa as "the queen of fertility" and has offered her advice on birth control. Every week *Nie* sends a complimentary copy to the president, but it is sent back in a chauffeur-driven car. The editors promptly pointed out to the public the expense of returning the magazine by this method.

In *Nie*'s pages the Catholic Church is second in popularity. Often it is treated with very bad taste (a portrait of the Virgin Mary next to artificial penises), but it is

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mainly the clericalization of Polish public life, the material wealth of the Church, and the use of Catholic religion for political purposes that are criticized. One issue this summer featured seventeen anti-Church cartoons (the magazine, printed on newsprint, has eight color pages), plus, on its cover, a picture of an eagle—the Polish emblem—dressed in a cassock and a collar.

The Church does counterattack: adherents stage demonstrations and priests urge from the pulpit not to buy or sell *Nie*. This summer Urban was charged with disseminating pornography for reproducing a photo from *Penthouse* of a naked woman with her lover, with a caption warning that under the Senate's anti-abortion bill, touching this woman could entail either eighteen years of alimony or else two years in jail. Catholics from Kielce said a mass for a just sentence. All this of course caused the magazine's sales to soar.

At least part of the appeal of *Nie* appears to be its contrary spirit. Urban's chauvinism is somewhat less doctrinaire that the usual Polish blend. *Nie* regularly "outs" members of the government who are homosexual (identified by usage of feminine grammar forms), but it also issues regular attacks on anti-Semitism. The editor's tendency toward self-parody only adds an extra twist. "Since the majority of Poles know me by sight and by name and are aware of my Jewish origin ... it is generally believed in Poland that Jews have huge earlaps. Therefore people with huge earlaps are Jews."

In mid-November Urban ventured beyond the pages of his magazine: he organized the first Congress of the Independent European Initiative (whose Polish acronym is also NIE), "a movement opposing a clerical and nationalist Poland and a populist dictatorship." In his keynote address, he announced that "all spontaneous politics in Poland is an expression of discontent.... We have to say 'nie' to the pretended democracy that is devoid of democratic structures and turns into 'a republic of buddies.' " One of the motions adopted by the thousand participants states that "Mister President and his office are one of the most painful problems that should be (dis)solved" and goes on to propose that Walesa follow the "missionary route" and travel to Western Europe to topple other Communist parties. The Congress (although not this particular motion) was reported in all television news broadcasts. Urban noted that in time the movement might take part in parliamentary elections.

Public reactions to Urban are varied: twice someone defecated at his office doorstep, and he gets threats of being castrated, and of having his big ears cut off. But he also gets fan letters, many people supply him with ideas for stories, and he receives checks to help subsidize the magazine. In fact, anyone buying *Nie* to indulge in this mixture of scum and satire helps Urban become the archetype of the capitalist he once vilified as the last spokesman for Poland's Communist regime.

ANNA HUSARSKA is a Polish journalist who writes frequently for TNR.

The Republican Crack-Up, South.

GONE WITH THE WIND

By Sidney Blumenthal

The morning after David Duke's defeat the Republican line of the day was laid out with corporate precision. His message, explained Vice President Dan Quayle, was "popular." The problem "was the messenger." Alas, the former Klansman and Nazi happened to be the wrong man. "Having a bad messenger endorse your views doesn't taint your own message," said the former acting chairman of the Republican National Committee, Charles Black, a GOP consultant who is a member of the president's strategy group. "And we won't be changing what we stand for."

George Bush's fear of Duke is really about the logic of the Electoral College. Over the long period of Republican presidential dominance, the South has become the region indispensable to victory. As the Democratic Solid South transmogrified into a Republican Solid South, an alliance between the country club and the country store (or its contemporary equivalent, the strip mall) was struck. At the top end of this coalition, the dream of the New South has been drained of all content except sheer commercialism; at the bottom, coded racial appeals playing on the status anxieties of the white working class have sufficed.

To win in 1992, assuming the Southern base, Bush must carry only about a third of the Electoral College votes of the Northern states. Theoretically, the South allows him extraordinary room for opportunism. But Duke and what he represents—a Southern GOP impelled to the far right, whose accelerating momentum is drawn from an economy spinning out of Bush's control—may sharply narrow the president's maneuverability. Under the stress of the economy, the GOP in the South is polarizing. So long as the business Republicanism of the New South was propelled forward, the Republican strategy could be maintained. But to the extent that its version of the New South is in trouble, so is the strategy. Duke's presence is a measure o rapidly rising political costs. At the least, his primitive Republicanism makes overt what may have been covert. The Republicans' frantic efforts to preserve the "message" from the taint of the "messenger" is a down payment on the escalating price of their Southern politics.

In the two recent intraparty contests, Bush backed the loser. In Louisiana the president supported the incumbent governor, Buddy Roemer, a New South

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Democrat turned Republican, who lost in the primaries to Duke. In Mississippi Bush supported Pete Johnson for governor, a former Democrat turned Republican whose lead at the beginning of the primary race over an obscure businessman named Kirk Fordice was 34 points. Yet Bush's candidate was routed, and Fordice went on to win the Statehouse.

The events in Mississippi make clear that what occurred in Louisiana was not an isolated case of swamp fever. Mississippi may be too backward to stand for the whole South, but the primeval quality of its politics may also make them portentous. Far more than in Louisiana, the Mississippi returns were a hammerblow against the New South, personified by one of its champions, 43-year-old Ray Mabus. A graduate of Ole Miss and Harvard Law School, Mabus returned to his state to work on the staff of a progressive governor, William Winter. Winter's major effort was education reform. At the time Mississippi still had no compulsory public schooling or public kindergartens. Winning this was a great triumph over the entrenched Bourbons. Known as "the boys of spring," Winter's aides then ran for a variety of state offices. Mabus was elected state auditor, whose powers he used to challenge corrupt county supervisors, pillars of the old order. His audits prompted forty FBI indictments and partially broke the Bourbon hold over patronage and contracts.

In 1987 Mabus was elected governor with a black-white coalition on a promise to institute "basic, drastic change." "Mississippi," he said, "will not be last." He implemented wide-ranging reforms in medical services, education, and welfare. But his grand scheme for education was blocked for lack of funding. And in getting the state fully on the Medicaid program, he closed three charity hospitals, which upset some uncomprehending blacks. He also replaced the black state party chairman, another upsetting diversion.

Through it all, Mabus's style—his educational background and his appeals to reason—make him seem aloof, especially to rural whites. In the primary he faced former Representative Wayne Dowdy, a folksy populist whose base had included whites and blacks. Outgunned and outspent, Dowdy, who had never been a good statewide candidate, having badly lost a U.S. Senate race in 1988, began sinking. The dark underside of populism suddenly reasserted itself; in desperation Dowdy linked the cosmopolitan Mabus with nefarious elders of Zion. The paramount issue, Dowdy announced before a large crowd at the Neshoba County Fair, was out-of-state contributors. "My question is this: Who is Arthur Goldberg and what county did he come from?" (Goldberg was from New Jersey.) "We've got to reclaim Mississippi," he went on. "We've got to take it back from the Madison Avenue ad agencies and the New York bond lawyers." Dowdy's anti-Semitic ploy did not ward off his defeat, but he had softened up Mabus for Fordice.

Fordice is a latter-day descendant of the Snopes family, Republican branch. He had inherited a contracting business from his father in Vicksburg and built it up in great part on federal contracts from the Army Corps of Engineers, where he had served as a colonel and developed extensive contacts. Early on, when the party had few members, he became a local Republican activist, volunteering to be a GOP county election commissioner. Fordice's career is a map of feral self-interest, of moving his business location back and forth across the state border and of liens for unpaid state taxes. He became the president of Associated General Contractors, a trade group, leading the cause against worker safety, minority set-asides, and competitive bidding. When Fordice announced for governor, it was generally thought that he stood no chance: the entire party hierarchy, up to President Bush, was backing Pete Johnson, who presented himself as a Republican version of Mabus. But Fordice slashed him as a party-switcher, not a true, ideological Republican. Fordice's primary victory was a repudiation of the attempted moderate strategy.

Against Mabus, he ran a classic pseudo-populist campaign against a depraved "establishment" in the name of the virtuous "people." He easily conflated the issues of education, welfare, quotas, taxes, and race. "You cannot repair your car by putting more gas in it," he explained about spending on education. Education, he said, must now come "second" to economic growth. In his ad decrying welfare, the most striking image was a black-and-white freeze-frame of a young black mother cradling her child. Usually the figure of maternal love—the Madonna—is not represented as negative. But the black mother in Southern conservative iconography connotes a chain of messages: sexual promiscuity, illegitimacy, dependency, taxes.

On the eve of the election the *Jackson Clarion-Ledger* reported that Fordice was the only candidate to answer a questionnaire submitted by a group calling itself the Nationalist Movement, described by the newspaper as promoting "white supremacy with close ties to the neo-Nazi skinheads." In response to the questionnaire, Fordice had called for repealing the Voting Rights Act of 1965. That night he held a rally that was graced with a telephone call from the president. "I look forward to working with you on your education program and all the things you've been talking about," said Bush. In the election black turnout was lower than expected and white conservative turnout rose: Fordice narrowly won. (The leader of the Nationalist Movement, Richard Barrett, attended the celebration.) Since his election, Fordice has tried to blunt criticism by appearing before the state NAACP convention. And not a single Republican has spoken against his opposition to the Voting Rights Act.

Fordice's campaign was in step with an elaborately devised Republican position in the South in which the Dixiecrats have been absorbed and become the Republicans. The GOP, however, has been able to yoke New South commercialism with a pseudo-populism only in the context of economic expansion. Affirmative action, quotas, and test-norming have become volatile under

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the pressure of contraction. In a period of decline, traces of a deeper disenchantment with progress itself, an idea of Yankee origin, have surfaced. All versions of the New South are in crisis.

David Duke has shucked the sheet and the swastika for the cross and the flag, but his rhetoric remains hooded. "Equal opportunity" has become his favorite phrase. He flings it about as if at once to mock the words and to steal their moral authority. That much is new. His argument that the reason the country is in economic and social decline, that blacks are unfairly getting too much, is essentially the post-bellum argument made by conservative Southerners against Reconstruction. The return of the repressed in the South comes when the hope of progress becomes a dubious proposition.

Though Duke was soundly defeated, he won 62 percent of the white Protestant vote—a profile of Southern electorates outside Louisiana, the only Southern state with a substantial population of Catholics. As a political animal, Duke is a shark who must constantly move through the waters or die. If he enters the presidential primaries and then launches an independent candidacy, the fundament of Bush's victory—the huge white majority in the South—is directly menaced. Lee Atwater, the master manipulator of Southern resentments, can no longer be summoned for advice or to take the blame.

Bush has wanted to exploit both the quota issue and his signing of the Civil Rights Act. But his right wing, especially in the South, is furious at him for the latter and even more furious that he may withhold the race card. "The message of 1980, 1984, and 1988—that message is still popular down here," said an influential Southern Republican consultant with close ties to the White House. "The Democrats are attacking to get the Republicans to back off. But we shouldn't back off from what we think is good politics." The politics of 1988, however, cannot easily be carried into 1992. Bush's Hortonism helped make Duke's "message" respectable. The irony is that Duke's euphemistic campaign makes a return to that route fraught with peril for Bush.

Bush cannot use coded rhetoric without reminding voters of Duke. If he invokes the racial symbols of pseudo-populism, he may also risk alienating moderate suburban voters even in the South. Bush is an agreeable emblem of success for them partly because he's a gentleman. But if he's not a gentleman and there is no success, a bag of pork rinds will not win their favor. Bush must worry that he may be as dispensable to his suburban base as sure-winner Dick Thornburgh was to his. The Solid South is by no means assured if the precarious Republican coalition begins to disintegrate into its class components. The burden of Republican history in the South has now brought Bush to a place where David Duke or Patrick Buchanan may fill in the blanks of his vague principles—and run against him. Bush is in the pincer. If he cannot revive the economy, he may feel compelled to play the race card once more. But it will be a glaringly obvious sign that he's afraid the hand he's holding is a losing one. •

Germany's right-wing revival.

BASHERS

By Frank Thaler

On Thursday, October 3, Germans marked the one-year anniversary of reunification. Some celebrated with a rampage of neo-Nazi violence against foreign workers and asylum-seekers. Over that weekend the violence spread. Arson attacks, stabbings, and beatings swept over the country—not to mention the subterranean undertone, unreported in crime statistics, of threats and racial slurs. The terror's main victims are people whose skin color most obviously identifies them as non-German, yet whites fall victim too, particularly Poles. Not only asylum-seekers and foreign workers but foreign students and plain tourists are fair game for German xenophobes.

Anti-foreign violence had been on an upswing ever since the opening of East German borders in November 1989. The initial euphoria of the approaching German unity, combined with Chancellor Kohl's success in steamrolling foreign opposition to the forced pace of reunification, gave many Germans a surge of national pride. "We are here again" ("*Wir sind wieder da*") rang the slogan of a new self-assertion. At the same time, the insecurities and mass stress of social and economic restructuring in East Germany provided the classic breeding grounds for violent scapegoating. The West Germans themselves had only recently emerged from a difficult restructuring process, carried out in the early and mid-'80s, which strengthened the economy while driving millions of young people and older workers to the margins of society. Their dilemma was intensified by a severe housing shortage—brought about in part by the practical elimination of public housing construction—and increasing homelessness. In the context of aroused national emotions, these difficulties have produced a toxic social brew.

For more than a year West German politicians had easy explanations. In proportion to population, there had been many more anti-foreign incidents in East Germany than in the West, whose leaders could attribute the violence to forty years of GDR socialism, and to its alleged deficits of civilization. However, by the end of September such evasion was no longer possible. From September 17 to 22 a pogrom took place in the Saxon city of Hoyerswerda, just north of Dresden. Neo-Nazi youths hurled rocks and Molotov cocktails at buildings housing foreign workers and asylum-seekers. A large crowd stood by and cheered—particularly when a bus convoy transporting foreigners out of the city was attacked.

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Hoyerswerda set off a chain reaction, as the brutality spread west. The university city of Freiburg in Baden-Württemberg was the scene of repeated assaults. The quantitative center of violence was Germany's most populous state, North Rhine-Westphalia, where thirteen attacks were recorded against asylum-seeker housing during the "weekend of German unity."

The connection between bad times and feelings of social threat at the hands of foreign groups is not unique to Germany. The United States, Britain, and France have had their share of racism. But none of the other leading NATO democracies has a *völkisch* concept of citizenship. In Germany what counts for citizenship is blood. A Pole who scarcely speaks German but can prove German blood by showing evidence of his grandfather's membership in the Nazi Party is not only bestowed German citizenship but is showered with subsidies to aid transition into German society. A 25-year-old resident of Berlin, born of Turkish parents in Germany, where he has lived all his life, is by blood a Turk and therefore always a Turk, with no practical hope of obtaining a fraction of the rights granted to the Pole with a Nazi grandfather.

In times of economic distress, this underlying rejection of foreigners takes its toll. And for all the official optimism, the signs are that the slump in East Germany is not going to dissipate soon. Officially, East German unemployment through October stood at 11.9 percent; economists estimate the real rate at around 30 percent, maybe more. The difference is concealed by definitional casuistry, early retirement, and dead-end jobs that expire after two years. Economic rationalization will in the first instance lead to further job loss. Billions invested in equipment under a two-year special incentive program will make industry more productive but will not relieve unemployment. Increasing rents will contribute to a relative, if not an absolute, impoverishment of the "loser" population.

Moreover, even an improvement in material conditions will not repair the psychological damage of the precipitate dissolution of East Germany. Many East Germans will have more money in their pockets. But aside from a small number of enterprises purchased by foreign investors, privatization has put former state industrial companies almost exclusively in the hands of West Germans. The near-term hope of East Germans is to become well-paid helots: they will enjoy a decent standard of creature comfort but will remain second-class citizens, held largely in contempt by the dominant Westerners. The more unfortunate East Germans, consigned to life on welfare, will count for even less. For people in both groups, one clear avenue for maintaining self-esteem will be to take pride in being German. People who otherwise feel worthless can at least feel superior to "lesser" breeds.

Meanwhile, a recent opinion survey commissioned by *Der Spiegel* newsmagazine showed 38 percent of West German respondents expressing "understanding" for right-wing radical tendencies arising from the "foreigner problem." The Republican and National People's Union parties, taken for dead in 1990, have revived at the polls in Bremen and Lower Saxony. Together they won 7.7 percent in Bremen, a 67 percent increase in their previous share. Worse, the Bremen SPD and CDU had themselves pandered to anti-foreign popular sentiment, both playing up their resistance to further settlement of asylum-seekers in Bremen.

Even the strength of the West German economy is now suspect. It has long thrived on low inflation and solid public finances. But massive public deficits—politically required to finance reunification in the face of Western sullenness over tax hikes—and spiraling wage settlements have undermined these traditional strengths. Underlying inflation has increased. Large unemployment and welfare expenditures in East Germany have pushed up social security taxes and made West German labor—already the most expensive in the industrialized world—still more costly. The hard-won competitive edge that Germany gained as a result of the CDU consolidation policy during the '80s could erode.

Germany will have an increasingly difficult time holding its competitive ground. The Germans do well in manufacturing goods of the second industrial revolution—chemicals, machines, automobiles. However, as for high-technology industries of the future—personal computers, microchips, semiconductors, telecommunications, biotechnology, materials technology—they are not in the running. Germany is already on the way to becoming a technological dependent of America and Japan.

In this context, as in places as diverse as Birmingham, England, and Louisiana, far-right extremism is a useful political tool. For Helmut Kohl, "the Chancellor of German unity," the barbarism has emerged at a good time. Kohl's false promises of instant prosperity for the East (at no cost to the West) could not be fulfilled. At first he blamed non-fulfillment on forty years of GDR socialism, coupled with Communist conspirators. But then the foreigners became a handy political theme. No more "abuse" can be permitted of the right to asylum, guaranteed in Article 16 of the Federal German Basic Law. Kohl has called for changes in Article 16. His position is sheer demagogy. Asylum-seekers are not responsible for housing shortages or any other problem in Germany. By making asylum law a central, burning issue of German politics, he implies that alleged asylum abusers *are* a source of ills, and that by getting rid of them, those ills will be cured. It does not seem to bother Kohl that he might be inciting further Hoyerswerda-style violence.

The opposition SPD is afraid of losing votes over the foreigner issue. In so-called resistance to changes in Article 16, it proposes accelerating the asylum procedure so that cases can be decided more quickly and rejected applicants expelled immediately. The national leadership has agreed to the erection of central "collection points," where asylum applicants would be gathered into ghettos pending decision of their cases.

One of the few politicians speaking any sense is the federal president, Richard von Weizsäcker. He has

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demonstratively visited the lodgings of asylum-seekers, and he has pointed out the sham nature of the controversy over changes in Article 16. The big problem, he asserts, will come with prospective mass migration from Eastern Europe. Literally millions could be streaming West. How can anyone seriously think that changing a couple of sentences in Article 16 will have practical bearing on a problem of that dimension? He is right, and his remarks invite another question: If the foreigner "problem" evokes wild reactions now, what happens if mass migration actually occurs? Political and economic collapse in the Soviet Union, civil war in Yugoslavia, rising unemployment and political uncertainty even in more fortunate Eastern European states—all these factors make such an occurrence more likely than not. If it does, will Germany's democracy have the stamina to cope?

FRANK THALER is a free-lance journalist in Germany.

The use and abuse of Norplant.

SHOT IN THE ARM

By Matthew Rees

Remember Norplant? About a year ago this matchstick-sized contraceptive was approved for use by the Food and Drug Administration, marking the most significant birth control development since the pill. Within days it was consumed by ideological warfare. A *Philadelphia Inquirer* editorial rashly suggested that poor women be offered fiscal incentives to use Norplant in order to "reduce the underclass." After the outcry, the media dropped the subject, but it didn't go away. Norplant was quickly taken up in state governments and courtrooms. Recently it was even featured on an episode of "LA Law." Government-sponsored Norplant use has been favorably received by a majority in public opinion polls and even by some liberal groups. For all of its worrying implications, it provides some sort of response to the acute problem of the underclass, a problem that seems otherwise devoid of cheap and effective solutions.

One month after Norplant's FDA approval, Superior Court Judge Howard Broadman of Visalia, California, used the contraceptive in the sentencing of Darlene Johnson, a 27-year-old pregnant mother of four who had been convicted of beating two of her children with a belt and an electrical extension cord. Broadman gave Johnson the option of spending one year in prison and three years on probation, or four months in prison, three years on probation, and three years on Norplant (which is effective for up to five years and has a success rate of 99.8 percent). Johnson, whose lawyer was not present at the sentencing, initially chose the Norplant sentence. She later changed her mind, but Broadman would not agree to the change. The case is now on appeal, with the help of the ACLU. Johnson is unlikely to end up on Norplant for health reasons (she suffers from high blood pressure, heart murmurs, and is diabetic), but the case has triggered a great deal of reaction—negative from both liberal and conservative groups, positive from the public.

Last February Kansas state Representative Kerry Patrick, who describes himself as a "pro-life Republican Presbyterian," introduced legislation that would require Norplant use for women of childbearing age who were convicted of felony possession or distribution of cocaine, crack, or heroin. He also wanted to offer poor women a one-time payment of $500 to use Norplant (they would be given the device free of charge), and then an extra $50 each year along with a free medical check-up. His reasoning was that "the creation of this program has the potential to save the taxpayers millions of their hard-earned dollars," and that "it's time we stopped worrying about the rights of the mother and started worrying about the rights of the children she's bringing into the world." The incentives bill was eventually voted down, 77-27; the bill seeking to require Norplant use is on hold while Kansas rewrites its sentencing guidelines.

Not to be outdone, Louisiana state Representative and deposed gubernatorial candidate David Duke introduced legislation in April offering $100 a year to poor women who agree to use Norplant. Duke's bill was amended to remove the cash incentives, however, and merely adds Norplant to the list of contraceptives that social and health care workers are required to discuss with welfare mothers. The drafted bill was approved in the House but languishes in the Senate Health and Welfare Committee.

Meanwhile, California Governor Pete Wilson had an extra $5 million allocated to his Office of Family Planning in order to make Norplant more readily available to poor women. The money was approved in the protracted state budget battle and will ultimately be used to reimburse OFP clinics serving women not covered by Medicaid or Medi-Cal. None of the money will be spent, however, until negotiations with Wyeth-Ayerst (Norplant's manufacturer) are completed to bring down Norplant's cost, which now runs at $350 for the device, $90 for insertion, and $84 for removal.

Providing funds for Norplant's voluntary use is the least controversial of all the proposals; only the most hard-core pro-life groups seem to have a problem with this. In fact, Norplant is now being funded by Medicaid in every state except California and Massachusetts. There is a much less united stand on voluntary Norplant use with fiscal incentives—the Patrick and Duke proposals. Although the idea is opposed by the National

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Organization for Women, the National Abortion Rights Action League, Feminists for Life, Americans United for Life, and the Family Research Council, all on the grounds that it is an example of coercive government intrusion, Planned Parenthood favors it. "Our agency believes that if a woman chooses to accept extra welfare payments for using Norplant, it's a choice that the woman makes and if she can get something extra for using birth control, that's positive," said Tina Proctor of the Planned Parenthood Federation in Aurora, Colorado. (Planned Parenthood has a welfare plan of its own, in which high-risk teenage girls are given one dollar for each day they don't get pregnant. In its first five years, from 1985 to 1990, the program had an 82 percent success rate.) And a July 1991 *Glamour* reader poll found that 47 percent believed that welfare women should be offered fiscal incentives to use Norplant.

That the incentives plan has quietly garnered a degree of support is not so surprising. Its main attraction is that it addresses the problem of welfare recipients failing to take advantage of the existing offer of free contraception; according to a Kansas study cited by Patrick, only one out of eight does so. In addition, the burden of an extra child is likely to make it far more difficult for a woman ultimately to get off welfare. The Kansas study shows that 92 percent of women who have a second child while on welfare will remain on some form of public assistance for the rest of their lives.

There are caveats, however. Increasing a woman's welfare payments, with whatever obligations, makes welfare more attractive. Yes, the cost of giving women Norplant is less than the cost of subsidizing care for additional children. But the extra money provided for Norplant use would be one more incentive not to get off welfare and could induce others to go on it. More generally, the incentives-for-Norplant plan is problematic because there is no inherent reason why women on welfare (unlike drug-addicted or child-abusing women) should not be having babies. "This plan insinuates to poor women that their children are not worthwhile," says Frederica Mathewes-Green of Feminists for Life.

Whereas "Norplant with financial incentives" has won over some groups, calls advocating required Norplant use by women either addicted to drugs or found guilty of child abuse or neglect have garnered little support from either the right or left. "The issue of causing or preventing pregnancies is not something that should be in the province of the state," says Kim Gandy, national secretary of NOW. "Once you prevent women who are addicted to drugs or abusing their children from getting pregnant, what's next? Black women? Jewish women?" In a more telling critique, Julie Mertis of the ACLU Reproductive Freedom Project points out: "You cannot teach women to act responsibly if you take away their responsibility." "Required Norplant use will drive women underground," adds Barbara Richards of the Pediatric Interim Care Center in Kent, Washington. "They will not go for treatment and will not go for prenatal care. The result will be that we'll just find more babies in dumpsters."

Nevertheless, a significant proportion of the public sees little wrong with this kind of sentencing. In a *Los Angeles Times* poll last May, 61 percent of those surveyed agreed with mandatory Norplant use for drug-abusing women of childbearing age; the figure for black respondents was 60 percent. Women were more likely than men to favor the measure. And the *Glamour* poll found that 55 percent of its readers approved of mandatory Norplant use for women convicted of child abuse. What the public—and especially the black public—is responding to is the desperate situation of children born to drug-abusing and child-abusing mothers.

Other programs have failed to alleviate this situation. A recent study conducted by the UCLA School of Medicine, for example, involved forty-seven babies identified as born to mothers who had used drugs during pregnancy, were on welfare, and were in high-risk situations. "Intervenors" were assigned to make weekly home visits during the first month of the study, and biweekly visits followed over the next two years. These visits were geared to infant and parent health, drug treatment, and birth control. Yet even when drug treatment programs were identified and transportation was arranged (in addition to all of the other assistance), only 15 percent of the mothers remained drug-free.

Norplant can be a last resort in these cases. Isabel Sawhill, an economist at the Urban Institute in Washington, says that requiring child-abusing or drug-addicted women to use Norplant "makes sense if done appropriately and with sensitivity. In other words, don't give a woman a choice between Norplant and an inappropriately stiff penalty, and combine Norplant use with education and counseling. Try to get a grass-roots understanding of the positive role Norplant can play in young people's lives." Sawhill has even floated the idea of implanting all girls at puberty with Norplant, noting that "if the practice were universally accepted, or nearly so, it would carry no stigma and no implication of immoral behavior." In that case, she reasoned, "the decision to have a child would become a conscious choice—decoupled from the dictates of biology, hormones, and peer pressure."

Interfering—however benevolently—with a woman's reproductive system is of course abhorrent. It may even be unconstitutional. (In the 1942 Supreme Court case *Skinner* v. *Oklahoma* the Court ruled that a state that required sterilization of habitual criminals was violating the Fourteenth Amendment.) Above all, it amounts to treating one symptom of the problem of the underclass, rather than its roots. But the current threat to children in our inner cities makes it an option that the morally serious can no longer simply dismiss. While we fail to commit the resources or the policies that might adequately address the pathology of the inner cities, we might begin to find ways to alleviate it for its most vulnerable victims. The children born of drug-abusing and violent women deserve our attention. And right now, Norplant may be the only practical option we've got. •

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Protectionism by other means.

TOXIC DUMPING

By James Bovard

In the ostensibly benign pursuit of free trade, U.S. law bars foreign companies from "dumping"—charging a lower price for a product in an export market than in its home market, or selling a product for less than its cost of production. But like other such "free-trade" measures, instead of merely preventing unfair competition, the anti-dumping law has increasingly been wielded as a protectionist tool. In the process, U.S. trade law has itself become a trade barrier, subverting American competitiveness while enriching a handful of industrial laggards.

Since 1980 the U.S. Commerce Department has "found" dumping in 95 percent of the cases it examined, often using criteria that hold foreign competitors to absurd standards. In some cases, for example, Commerce judges the fairness of a foreign company's U.S. price by comparing it with the company's sales price in a third market. One company was convicted because its U.S. prices were 0.73 percent less than its prices to the United Kingdom. (Thus foreign companies are in effect forced to charge their American customers the highest prices in the world.) Another Commerce requirement is that foreign companies earn at least an 8 percent profit on their U.S. sales. Yet the average American corporate profit is only 5 to 6 percent. So even when a company is making a profit, Commerce can penalize it for dumping.

Once Commerce decrees that certain imports are dumped, the International Trade Commission (ITC) must judge whether the allegedly unfair imports are injuring any of their American competitors and decide what penalties to impose. And since falling profits and lost sales are taken as a sign of injury, the ITC's method of protecting American companies tends to sacrifice the strongest, most profitable U.S. industries to the weakest. In effect, ITC decisions sometimes amount to a "reverse industrial policy," says former ITC Vice Chairman Ron Cass.

The protection of weak domestic companies can bushwhack stronger domestic companies as well. In a 1989 anti-friction bearings case, the dominant U.S. petitioner was Torrington Company, renowned for its poor service and unreliable bearings. At an ITC hearing, a parade of representatives from American manufacturers begged the ITC not to cut off their supply of high-quality foreign bearings. Jacki Doxey, a bearings buyer for Stowe Manufacturing Company, said, "We have to build Torrington's notorious unreliability into our production schedules." In fact, all American companies produced low-quality bearings, and at the time also had a one-year backlog of orders. Yet the ITC decided to impose higher penalty tariffs of up to 170 percent to help the American bearings industry. Kenneth Kumm, trade manager for 3M Corporation, complained that this increased the price 3M had to pay for bearings by between 120 and 150 percent—undercutting the competitiveness of 3M's exports, as well as that of thousands of other American companies that use bearings in their products.

A recent U.S. anti-dumping duty on Japanese computer screens shows how, by narrowly protecting one part of an industry, ITC policy wreaks more widespread economic havoc. Commerce ruled that Japanese advanced computer flat-panel imports, a key component of laptop and notebook computers, were being dumped at a 63 percent margin. (Commerce concocted this number largely by vastly overestimating research costs, thereby "proving" that a profitable Japanese company was taking big losses to grab a larger share of the U.S. market.) Apple, IBM, and Compaq begged the ITC not to impose prohibitive duties. There was no viable U.S. producer of advanced computer flat panels: American computer makers could either buy Japanese or abandon the cutting edge of their industry. Yet a majority of ITC commissioners discovered injury mainly because Japanese imports prevented would-be U.S. flat-panel producers from raising the capital to begin manufacturing. They ignored the fact that even if U.S. companies had raised the necessary capital, it would have taken them three or more years to supply the U.S. computer industry's needs.

After the ITC's decision, Toshiba announced plans to move its U.S. computer-making operations abroad, Dolch Computer Company of San Jose decided to transfer jobs to Munich, Apple is moving some operations to Asia, and IBM announced on November 7 that it may shift its laptop manufacturing business to Japan. An IBM spokesman described the ITC's decision as "an eviction notice from the U.S. government to the fastest-growing part of the U.S. computer industry."

The flat-panel decision is a disaster for American competitiveness. It has penalized American computer makers because it adds more than $1,100 to the cost of producing each laptop, an expense that their foreign competitors will not have to contend with. U.S. companies are nowhere nearer to producing flat panels. And thousands of American jobs have moved overseas.

The U.S. trade law's anti-import bias will prove especially costly when steel import quotas expire in March 1992. A 1990 ITC study found these quotas actually increased the U.S. trade deficit by undercutting American exports of products containing steel. Yet the steel lobby, which effectively authored much of the current dumping law in 1974, is preparing a flood of petitions against imports, and with the current definitions of dumping and injury it should have little trouble proving its case. Petitions against steel pipe from Mexico, Brazil, Taiwan, Venezuela, Korea, and Romania were already filed in September.

Another effect of U.S. trade law is to confer de facto monopolies on American companies. The ITC's 1989

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decision to penalize small business telephone system imports from Japan, Korea, and Taiwan primarily benefited AT&T. A 1991 ITC decision penalized word processor imports from Japan and Singapore to benefit Smith Corona, the sole remaining word processor producer in the United States. A 1991 ITC decision effectively gave a monopoly on the sale of benzyl paraben (a key ingredient in fax paper) to a Fitchburg, Massachusetts, company.

It would be difficult to devise a more foolish way to make national economic policy than the ITC's. Under current U.S. trade law, an industry's incompetence, a decline in demand for its products, or technological backwardness becomes an entitlement to relief from competition. The effect is to cripple competitive American companies, and to provide elaborate incentives for the gradual evisceration of American industry. In an alleged assault on "dumping," we have in fact created industrial policy designed to impair, rather than improve, the economic health of the country. Let's dump it.

JAMES BOVARD's book *The Fair Trade Fraud* has just been published by St. Martin's.

The Republican Crack-Up, East.

THE BOSTON SLASHER

By Jacob Weisberg

The 1990 campaign for Massachusetts governor inverted usual party loyalties. John Silber, the Democrat, was a social conservative who drew working-class and older voters whose hero was Ronald Reagan. William Weld, the Republican, campaigned on a platform of abortion, gay and civil rights, and environmentalism, which won him the overwhelming support of Dukakis liberals despite his right-of-Reagan economic conservatism. Silber, who had a nine-point lead ten days before the election, attempted to play upon the state's ancient class resentments, baiting his rangy, patrician opponent as an "orange-headed WASP," a "Yankee lawyer," and a "back-stabbing son of a bitch." Weld kept his cool, and squeezed past Silber by 76,000 votes.

Most Democrats—and most Republicans—agree it could only happen where it happened. The most liberal state in the country, Massachusetts has three registered Democrats for every Republican. Even its conservatives tend to be enlightened Brahmins, like Weld's predecessors Frank Sargent and James Saltonstall, rather than fire-eating new rightists of the type that considers the 46-year-old governor's views on abortion and homosexuality heresy. But it would be a mistake to dismiss Weld Republicanism as a Dukakis-induced peculiarity, or a merely local phenomenon. The governor's political formula, which marries a more honest version of Reagan's anti-tax populism to an uncompromising social liberalism, has a powerful generational appeal, one that may transcend the boundaries of the Bay State.

Weld is lucky to have as his laboratory a state that had no choice but to "downsize" its government. At the epicenter of a regional boom in the 1980s, the Massachusetts miracle had gone sour by 1990. The state was facing a $3 billion budget deficit, and with businesses fleeing and unemployment at 9.5 percent, a tax increase was out of the question. And with the state's securities teetering on the brink of junk bond status, borrowing was not just ill-advised but impossible. Thanks in part to the overwhelming unpopularity of Dukakis, Weld was able to push through a drastic reduction in spending, cutting state expenditures 5.5 percent in nominal terms. The draconian budget he signed in July slashed expenditures on welfare, Medicaid, low-income fuel assistance, local aid, and dozens of other programs. This year the commonwealth will reduce its payroll, through layoffs, attrition, and early retirement, by 7,000 employees.

The fiscal crisis created a convenient excuse for reforms that Weld favors on social policy grounds but would have trouble selling in more prosperous times, such as purging the able-bodied from the rolls of the state's General Relief program. "I frequently get asked the question: What do you say to an ex-convict who can't find work?" Weld says. "My answer is we've got 9 percent unemployment in this state. There are a lot of people who can't find work. And I don't see putting ex-convicts as a class ahead of people who are not ex-convicts." Weld's ultimate goal for the program is "to make the safety net a trampoline as opposed to a hammock."

The governor characterizes his broader program as "entrepreneurial government," which he defines as "governing with an eye more toward the results than the process." The main features of his plan are privatization, deregulation, and tax-cutting. Already the state has turned to the private sector for health care for 9,500 prison inmates (savings: more than $8 million)

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and moved mentally retarded residents of state mental hospitals to private facilities (savings: $140 million-plus over three years). The governor is moving ahead with plans to privatize rental car inspections and the collection of child-support benefits, and wants to auction off the Massachusetts Turnpike. He says needless rules, like the seventy-eight pages of restrictions imposed on child-care providers, keep would-be competitors from entering the market for government services. The last component of the plan is lower taxes. Weld vetoed a Dukakis-era state tax on services that was scheduled to be phased in starting this year. He is now pushing for additional cuts, beginning with a $52 million credit for job creation targeted at biotechnology, a local industry Weld wants to keep in state.

The governor's critics argue that his end goal is to discredit the idea of government in order to dismantle it entirely. "I can't find anything that government does that Bill Weld feels passionately about," says Jim Braude, the director of the Tax Equity Alliance for Massachusetts, a liberal group. Braude is furious at the Democrats in the legislature, who haven't risen to the fight. He compares their strategy to that of the national Democrats facing Reagan in 1981. Believing that Weld had a mandate to cut the budget, and lacking a veto-proof majority in the upper house, they are banking on Weld getting the blame when public services suffer. If Weld's stimuli fail to arouse the economy, the Democrats may have the last word. Since the cuts began to take effect, Weld's popularity has dropped. His approval rating, which was more than 70 percent this summer, dipped to 41 percent in one recent poll. "He can't keep blaming everything on Dukakis," says Mark Gearan of the Democratic Governors Association. "Increasingly it's going to be his burden."

If there's a mood of doom in Massachusetts it has yet to settle on the executive office on Beacon Hill, where the atmosphere resembles that of the Office of Management and Budget in the early days of David Stockman's directorship. As Weld was telling me about the difficult choices he has had to face in reducing expenditures, the sound of screaming began to filter through the door of his office. In the next room, budget-slashing staffers were amusing themselves with a machine that generated theatrical cries of agony. "Medicaid—Aiiihhhh!!!! General Relief—Aiiiiiih!!!!" More embarrassed than amused, the governor ordered his aides to behave while the press was in his office. But the atmosphere of merry mischief is one Weld himself created. One of his first acts as governor was to remove the portrait of Sam Adams that hung over Dukakis's desk and replace it with one of James Michael Curley, the ward-heeling Boston mayor of the 1920s and '30s who ran his first campaign from prison.

WILLIAM WELD BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Weld's critics say it takes someone who has never known poverty to inflict as much misery on the state's poor as he has—to write unemployables off the welfare rolls, or let old people freeze through a New England winter. Indeed, adversity is not something he has ever experienced. Weld grew up on a family estate farm on Long Island and prepped at the Middlesex School in Concord, Massachusetts, before moving on to Harvard, where he graduated first in his class in classics, then to Oxford and Harvard Law School. A million dollars of family money helped him win election as governor. Weld's wife, Susan, is a Roosevelt. Despite his sheltered upbringing, he is a creature of his generation. A rock 'n' roll fan, he likes the early Rolling Stones, Traffic, and the Grateful Dead.

Weld's politics have always been Republican, with a widening libertarian streak. In college he was impressed by neoconservatives Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer, and the criminologist James Q. Wilson. His biggest influence, however, is Friedrich Hayek, whose magnum opus, *The Constitution of Liberty*, Weld read in law school. In the 1980 Republican primaries he supported Phil Crane. Crane, a representative from Chicago, stood to the right of Reagan on economic issues, and though vehemently pro-life, shared Weld's laissez-faire inclina-

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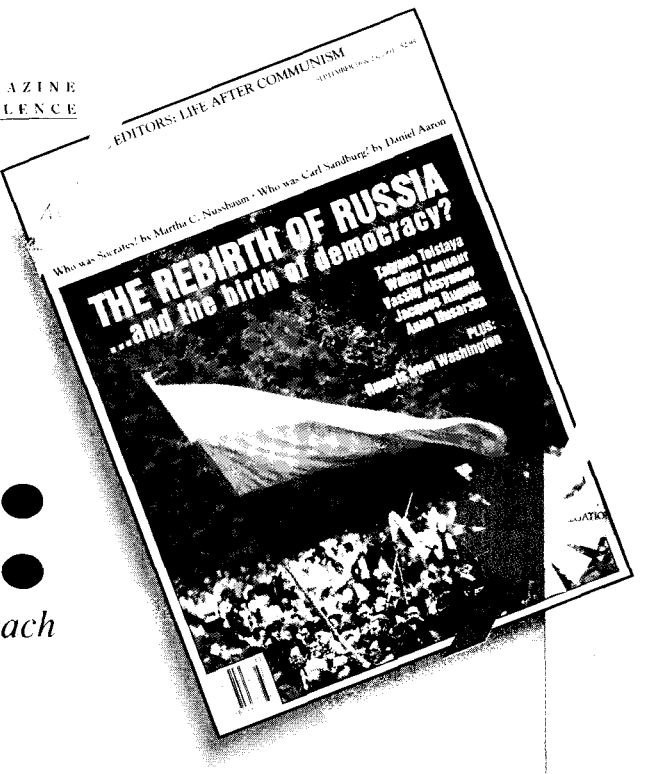

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tion on matters of personal conduct. Until the early 1970s, when he thought the organization became too politicized, Weld was a card-carrying member of the ACLU. He says he dislikes roadblocks, drug tests, and random searches. But as a former prosecutor, he is hawkish on most criminal justice matters, "to the right of Attila the Hun," as he put it during the campaign when he promised to remove TV sets from cells and set prisoners to work breaking rocks. He plans to sign a bill bringing back the Massachusetts death penalty. Talking tough on crime makes it easier for him to occupy liberal space on other social issues; Weld successfully immunized himself against attacks by Silber on his moral permissiveness. The price the governor pays is a small measure of inconsistency. As a principled libertarian, Weld might be expected to support the legalization of marijuana. That he does not, one suspects, is a concession to political reality.

In 1981 Weld was named U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts, where he distinguished himself by winning convictions in a number of publicized political corruption cases. Elected head of the attorney general's advisory committee of U.S. Attorneys in 1985, he got to know Ed Meese, who hired him to head the Justice Department's Criminal Division. His tenure in Washington was brief, and remarkable mostly for its dramatic conclusion. Weld joined Meese's chief deputy, Arnold Burns, in flamboyantly resigning in 1988 over Meese's conduct. Some viewed the move as self-serving. "There was never any doubt in my mind that Bill's ultimate ambition was to run for governor in Massachusetts," says Pat Korten, a Meese loyalist in the department. "From that standpoint he needed to separate himself from Meese."

If there was an element of opportunism in Weld's resignation, however, there was also an element of principle. Weld thought Meese's relationship with E. Bob Wallach, who was later convicted in the Wedtech scandal, presented a clear conflict of interest. "I did think the operations of the department were somewhat politicized," he says. "And as the Wedtech referrals to the special prosecutor kept banging in one after another, ultimately I concluded that I was in an untenable position." After he and Burns made their announcement, they were summoned to the White House. According to Reagan chronicler Lou Cannon, Burns delighted the president by telling him he would do anything for him, "including going up and down the halls of the White House with a broom in my behind." Weld spoke second, telling the president that if it were up to him he would seek an indictment of Meese. The president fell asleep while he was talking. This says much about Reagan, but something too about Weld. Affable though he is, the governor can be a bit dull.

After Weld returned to the Boston law firm of Hill & Barlow, his political views continued to evolve. "After the *Webster* case," he says, "I had to think through the abortion issue, as I've had to think through the gay rights issue." Weld is not unhappy with the description of himself as a libertarian—though he says his "lefty" views on environmental protection constitute an important exception. "I have flirted with it throughout my adult years, but it's only been in the last twelve to twenty-four months when I've really had to reflect on the exercise of government coercion and how it relates to the individual that I've come to identify myself as a libertarian," he says. "A couple of years ago if you'd asked me, I would have said, Oh, I'm hard to label." Now Weld has been embraced by the CATO Institute and *Reason* magazine. His intellectual development is unusual. Many conservatives begin as libertarians, only to have their absolutism tempered by the realities of politics and the experience of power. Weld has done the reverse, becoming more radical as he got older and more powerful.

The difference between Weld's libertarianism and moderate Republicanism becomes clearer when he's compared with his California colleague Pete Wilson. Like Weld, Wilson ran on an anti-tax platform. Faced with a budget shortfall, Wilson agreed to a massive $8 billion increase. Weld, on the other hand, held firm to his no-new-taxes pledge. Both men advocated gay rights during their campaigns. But faced with a revolt by outraged anti-tax Republicans, Wilson vetoed a gay rights bill he had said he would sign. Weld drew attention to the issue by sending Wilson an open letter on the subject in September. "The Massachusetts GOP is increasingly attracting large numbers of followers who believe libertarian principles should guide our government," he wrote. "A government which respects individual rights and which does not intrude into the private lives of individuals is the government which I believe best represents the spirit and goals of American democracy."

The way Weld puts this is instructive. He doesn't tell Republicans that they should approve of homosexuality or abortion. His argument is that if they believe in limited government, they should also want a government that does not intrude into the private lives of its citizens—and that means some measure of social tolerance. This differs from the position of old-time liberal Republicans like Elliot Richardson, who were for big government and social tolerance and didn't draw a connection between the two.

Few dispute that Weld's views are intellectually coherent. The question is whether they have a politically wide appeal. Democratic Representative Barney Frank, who calls Weld's gay rights stand "more than courageous," says there is no larger GOP audience for Weld's stance. "It doesn't work nationally at all," he says. "It was only conceivable in Massachusetts because the Republican Party was so beaten down. He is very much sui generis." The first test of Frank's thesis will be how the Republicans deal with the abortion plank in their platform, which as now written advocates a constitutional amendment banning abortions. A faction within the party wants to exchange the current wording for a "big tent" statement on abortion—the phrase is Lee Atwater's. Weld's chief secretary and political guru John Moffitt goes even further, arguing that the Republican platform should be

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explicitly pro-choice. This position is popular with baby-boom Republicans, who are in the process of becoming a majority within the party. "There are fewer social conservatives every year because of the workings of the mortality tables," says David Boaz of CATO.

"I don't know how social liberalism will fly in the national party," Weld says. "But we'll find out, because it's going to well up." Will he be the vehicle for the movement? "If we win re-election by a significant margin in '94, he is going to be on a short list of presidential or vice presidential candidates," says Moffitt. "It's a logical conclusion to a political career, like playing in the majors." Weld himself says he has every intention of seeking a second term as governor and is trying to defuse speculation that he might run against a vulnerable Ted Kennedy in '94 as a way to shore up his support with right-wing Republicans. In the meantime, his fortunes depend almost entirely on whether he can awaken the state's dormant economy. Dan Quayle, among others, will be watching with interest. •

The Republican Crack-Up, West.

THE BEACHED BOYS

By Fred Barnes

SACRAMENTO

U.S. Representative Bill Dannemeyer, California's angriest conservative, took full advantage of his position on the resolutions committee at the state Republican convention last September to zing a fellow Republican, Governor Pete Wilson. Dannemeyer first backed a resolution criticizing Wilson for agreeing to an $8 billion tax increase. When other committee members balked at attacking Wilson frontally, Dannemeyer offered an alternative. It praised three GOP governors—William Weld of Massachusetts, John Engler of Michigan, Tommy Thompson of Wisconsin—for standing up to Democratic legislatures and not raising taxes, and gave Wilson an implicit jab for compromising. The resolution sailed through the committee and was overwhelmingly approved by the convention. Dannemeyer was delighted, Wilson stung.

This skirmish gives you a pretty good idea of the unity among California Republicans. Conservatives and moderates detest each other, and they are engaged in a civil war. In a private conversation last spring with GOP legislative leaders, Wilson dismissed anti-tax Republicans as "fucking irrelevant." Word of Wilson's rebuke spread fast. Conservatives soon boasted of being "FI." At the convention, they sported "FI" buttons to taunt moderate Wilsonites. There's also a cultural split at work. Conservatives, who constitute a majority among Republicans in the state Assembly and Senate, are convinced that Wilson thinks they're rubes, bumpkins, or crazies, and wants to replace them with a legislature full of moderate clones of himself. They retaliate when they can. Half the audience, led by Dannemeyer, walked out when Senator John Seymour, Wilson's appointee, addressed the convention.

Some of this is typical petty infighting. A lot isn't. The feeling runs deep among conservatives that Wilson betrayed the party by pushing through his whopping tax hike. At a conservative forum last July in Long Beach hosted by radio talkster Rush Limbaugh, Wilson's name was booed. "Saddam Hussein didn't get booed," says Republican legislator Pat Nolan. "Pete Wilson's name was booed every time." Wilson, in turn, sneers at "so-called conservatives" who he believes lack the guts to make unpopular spending cuts and won't raise taxes either.

The split isn't only over taxes. California Republicans are also bitterly divided on the lifestyle agenda: abortion, gay rights, and the environment. "Are there philosophical differences between my caucus and Pete Wilson?" asked then GOP Assembly Leader Ross Johnson last April. "Well, while he was announcing his environmental program, our caucus was out hunting spotted owls with AK-47s. Then we roasted them over an old-growth fire." Johnson was supposedly poking good-natured fun at Wilson at a dinner. His barb had a sharp edge. When lifestyle issues are salient, Republicans polarize. If the fighting continues, says Seymour, "the danger is we end up like the Democratic Party. We'll be a divided party that is next to impossible to unify because it's broken into so many highly vocal factions."

Sorry, senator, the bickering is certain to continue. California has two Senate races next year, and each GOP primary fight pits a pro-life conservative against a pro-choice moderate. Seymour is challenged by Dannemeyer, the noisiest foe of gay rights in Congress, for the seat once held by Wilson. Dannemeyer's most famous statement: "It's time our society reaffirms that God's plan for man was Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve." Seymour says Republicans should "reach out" to

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gays. U.S. Representative Tom Campbell of Silicon Valley faces conservative TV commentator Bruce Herschensohn of Los Angeles in the fight for the seat Democratic Senator Alan Cranston is vacating. (Palm Springs Mayor Sonny Bono, Cher's ex, is also running for the Republican nomination in this race.) Campbell opposes offshore oil drilling. Herschensohn says: "People who live on the coast don't like to see oil rigs. I'd like to have enough gas in my car to drive to the coast to see one."

The political stakes in all this are high. Wilson's future depends on whether the budget deal works and whether he can patch things up with conservatives. He wants to run for re-election in 1994 and for the White House in 1996. Right now his prospects look bleak. His popularity, at 29 percent, is the lowest for any California governor since modern polling began. Republicans also appear doomed to losing one or both of the Senate races. Acrimonious primaries won't help. Either Seymour or Dannemeyer would be underdog to the likely Democratic nominee for what Republicans are already calling "the Feinstein seat," referring to former San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein. Campbell or Herschensohn have a better shot—now. After a primary campaign in which Herschensohn tars Campbell as a "liberal" and Campbell pounds Herschensohn for opposing choice on abortion, that may change.

Then there's the national angle. The old saw that when California sneezes, the country catches cold takes on fresh meaning for Republicans. California gave the nation Ronald Reagan, Reaganism, the anti-tax revolt (beginning with passage of Proposition 13 in 1978). Maybe it's just that national fads strike first in California. In any case, internecine warfare erupted in California first, ending nearly twenty-five years of relative harmony. Reagan, elected governor in 1966, was so popular that any differences moderates had with his conservatism were submerged. Then came George Deukmejian, governor from 1982 to 1990, who "had friends in both sides of the party," says Ken Khachigian, a Wilson adviser and also Herschensohn's campaign manager. The last bloody ideological battle in California was in 1968, when conservative Max Rafferty whipped moderate Senator Thomas Kuchel in the primary. Rafferty lost to the Democratic nominee, Cranston.

The feuding in California over taxes, abortion, gay rights, and the environment may soon go national. The parallels between Wilson and Bush are eerie. Both ran as anti-tax candidates and conservatives with compassion. Bush has the "kinder, gentler" approach. Wilson promotes "preventive government" (preventing social ills from developing). Both forged a budget deal with Democrats that raised taxes and enraged conservatives. Both saw their economies slide, revenues slip, deficits grow. And Bush now may face the same withering attacks in his re-election bid next year as Wilson's alter ego, Seymour, and on the same issues—taxes, abortion, gay rights, the environment. Bush's expected foe, conservative columnist Patrick Buchanan, is journalism's closest approximation of Dannemeyer, Seymour's opponent. One more thing. Dannemeyer may not beat Seymour, but his challenge diminishes Seymour's chances of winning in the fall. The Buchanan challenge may have the same impact on Bush.

How did California Republicans get in this mess? There was grousing when Deukmejian raised taxes in the final years of his second term, especially by Assemblyman Tom McClintock, the most fiscally conservative Republican in Sacramento, who represents the exurbs north of L.A. But unity reigned after Deukmejian announced that he wouldn't seek re-election in 1990. McClintock introduced a petition in the legislature asking Wilson to run for governor. The former mayor of San Diego, Wilson had been re-elected to the Senate in 1988 as a fiscal conservative, foreign policy hawk, and social liberal. Conservatives were willing to swallow the social liberalism out of desperation to elect a GOP governor. They wanted to undo the Democratic gerrymandering of the 1980s and make big gains in the legislature and Congress. A nasty primary fight might let a Democrat win. Wilson was unopposed for the nomination.

Wilson defeated Feinstein, 49 percent to 46 percent, in a campaign in which taxes was one of the few differentiating issues. "I believed he was a good, solid fiscal conservative," says McClintock. "The whole 1990 campaign was run around that theme. He said, 'Dianne Feinstein's a taxer and spender and I'm not.' " Wilson further reassured conservatives in October 1990 when, still a senator, he opposed the five-year budget deal between Bush and Congress that boosted taxes substantially.

As soon as Wilson took office, conservatives got the willies. McClintock and seven other legislators sent him a letter urging deep spending cuts and no new taxes. Wilson didn't reply. He was suddenly confronted by a deficit pegged at $7 billion (in a $56 billion budget) and growing rapidly. His first plan was $5 billion in cuts and $2 billion in taxes. That didn't last long. By April the deficit had reached $14 billion and Wilson's new formula was half-and-half, $7 billion in cuts, $7 billion in taxes. Conservatives were apoplectic, all the more when Wilson later agreed to what he'd pointedly opposed, an increase in the top rate on income (from 9 percent to 11 percent).

Wilson and conservatives never fit together comfortably. He's a pragmatist who believes in government. McClintock and Pat Nolan of Glendale, the former GOP Assembly leader, advocate dramatic cuts in the size of government. Wilson didn't find common ground with the more accommodating conservatives either. Ross Johnson, later ousted as Republican leader with a nudge from Wilson, was willing to raise taxes $3 billion or $4 billion, but not $7 billion or $8 billion. Johnson and others balked at Wilson's desire to couple a big tax hike with education spending cuts. "That's the worst of all worlds for Republicans," Johnson told Wilson. "What our people care about is taxes and quality education for our kids. You want to put a double whammy on us."

When Wilson appeared before the Republican caucus, he often clashed with McClintock, a budget whiz.

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Last April the governor dismissed McClintock's list of proposed spending cuts as "ones we've done, are not feasible, or are peanuts." If the Democratic legislature won't pass them, seek support from the people, responded McClintock. Wilson said he'd take his case to the people after the budget was wrapped up. "If you raise taxes $7 billion or $8 billion, you won't have any standing to go to the people with anything," McClintock snapped. "Well, Tom, let me tell you something," Wilson replied. "I'm going to bet you're wrong."

When Wilson later outlined the specifics of his budget, McClintock complained that some reductions weren't real. Wilson cut him off. "You're obviously not informed on the budget," he said. McClintock and Nolan said the revenue projections were fantastic—roughly 23 percent growth over three years. "In the Reagan era, we never had growth like that," says Nolan.

The Reagan analogy is significant. Wilson consciously sought to emulate the bold approach Reagan took in his first year as governor in 1967. Reagan accepted a big tax hike, and his budget problems were largely over for the rest of his two terms. The Reagan model isn't working for Wilson. In 1967 California was booming. Now the economy is sour. "California suffers from an anti-business attitude," says Republican Attorney General Dan Lungren. "California is being transformed into a state of tax consumers instead of tax providers," adds a Wilson adviser. Last summer's budget agreement, which was supposed to last five years, began to come apart almost instantly. In October Wilson announced a new $3 billion deficit.

Wilson put a double whammy on himself. The budget mess lingers. And by pushing the largest state tax increase in history, he discarded the issue that unifies moderate and conservative Republicans: low taxes. That, argues McClintock, "is the one thing on which all Republicans agree. We no longer have that to bind Republicans of otherwise diverse views. It's a period of great danger for the Republican Party. All the advantages we had in the 1980s have been thrown away." The result: differences among Republicans are accentuated as they dwell on issues that polarize them.

Gay rights, for instance. Wilson courted gay voters in 1990. From all appearances he was ready to sign the gay rights bill passed by the legislature (which Republicans overwhelmingly opposed). "The governor had given every indication, including private conversations with members of our caucus, that his intention was to sign it," says Ross Johnson. Conservatives urged a veto. So did Seymour, who expected to be pilloried by Dannemeyer as Wilson's surrogate if the governor signed. The rupture in the GOP would be "full and complete," says Khachigian. There would be "insurrection in our party," says Nolan. Wilson would be an irredeemable pariah to conservatives.

Wilson stepped back from the precipice. He vetoed the bill, arguing lamely that it might be "oppressive to potentially numerous innocent employers." His sudden concern for business was especially ironic since he'd signed a parental leave bill a few days before that was potentially more burdensome to employers. Wilson also infuriated conservative critics of the bill by denouncing "the tiny minority of mean-spirited, gay-bashing bigots." Dannemeyer took the slap personally.

Abortion stirs even more emotions than gay rights. And it is bound to emerge as an issue once the Senate contests intensify. The primary is June 2. "In this state the vast majority of Republicans are pro-choice," insists Wilson. If that's true, Campbell and Seymour will exploit the situation. Campbell is a former Stanford professor with the best résumé in Congress (Chicago B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Harvard Law, Supreme Court law clerk, White House fellow, etc.). He styles himself a "new conservative." He's for cutting the capital gains tax and voted against Bush's budget deal. He's also pro-civil rights, pro-gay rights, pro-environment, and pro-choice. Herschensohn, who's pro-life, dreads the abortion issue. "As soon as you bring it up, you never get off it," he says. "Social issues aren't my cup of tea." If abortion dominates the campaign and "the polls are right, I lose."

Herschensohn is more at ease with the environmental issue. Environmentalists are the same people who advocated "peace" and "love" in the 1960s, he says. (He invariably notes that Campbell voted for George McGovern in 1972.) "What they meant by peace was surrender. What they meant by love was dope. What they mean now by environmentalism is socialism." Dannemeyer couldn't have said it better. He wants to repeal the Endangered Species Act and eliminate California's Environmental Protection Agency, which Wilson created. Dannemeyer warns that "the enemy from within" is a growing "environmental party" in this country. "It says it is OK to slaughter 1.5 million unborn humans every year but that it is not tolerable to kill one fish or critter.... It has the potential of shutting down the economy of America."

The California wars would have a spillover effect on Republicans elsewhere even if the major players didn't see themselves as national players. But they do. Campbell says his nomination will encourage economic conservatives all over the country to be more public with their pro-choice and pro-environment leanings. Seymour identifies with the movement to expunge the abortion issue from the party's platform. Dannemeyer has cast himself as the protector of America against two insidious foes, environmentalists and gay activists. Herschensohn, a former Nixon White House aide, concentrated on national issues in his TV commentaries.

The result of the battle? In all likelihood, the moderates may get nominated, but the conservatives will have influence, tugging the party to the right. That's what might happen with Bush. It's already happened with Wilson. Having crossed conservatives once, Wilson is wary of another clash. Thus the gay rights veto. To cope with the new $3 billion shortfall, he says, "What we don't do is add any taxes. The debate is going to be about how and where we cut." Sounds like a peace overture to conservatives to me. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Southern Discomfort

It's not quite right to say that Martin Scorsese has remade **Cape Fear** (Universal). This is no more a mere remake of the 1962 film than John Huston's *The Maltese Falcon* was a remake of two earlier versions. Scorsese's film is as original as it could be in the circumstances. (Admittedly, I'm comparing out of memory: I don't think I could sit through the J. Lee Thompson version again, especially after this new one.)

Scorsese hasn't been notable for his radical subject matter, but his career certainly isn't a series of pigeonholes. Then why, just as he is arching out in reputation and power, did he choose to make a genre thriller? The buzz in the film world is that he was paying a debt to Universal. He was planning, and will now do, a film of Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*, an especially tantalizing idea since the book is so far from the usual haunts of this vivid and (in two senses) vulgar director. But Universal had backed a project that was dear to him, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, so when the studio proposed this remake, he felt obliged. Well, at least this thriller gives us some conventional fare to munch on while the gourmet dish is being prepared.

The new screenplay—based on the earlier one by James R. Webb and the novel by John D. MacDonald—was written by Wesley Strick, author of the neat thriller *True Believer* a few years back. With Scorsese's help, Strick has recast the characters, trying to dump the stodge and add some glints of verity.

The setting is the South; Cape Fear is the name of a river in North Carolina. The basic drive is a convict's quest for vengeance, after his release, on the person he holds responsible for his fourteen-year prison term. The convict is a psychopathic rapist-batterer. He wants revenge on the lawyer—now a successful man with a wife and 15-year-old daughter—who was once his defender. (*Not* the prosecutor.) The Strick-Scorsese twist is that this lawyer is not the Joe Honesty he was in the 1962 version. At the trial the lawyer deliberately withheld evidence that would have helped his client because he thought the man ought to be convicted. The con has subsequently found that out. After his release, he also finds out that the lawyer is fooling around with another woman.

The ex-con is a Georgia cracker, his torso tattooed with Bible quotations and a huge cross. Robert De Niro plays—inhabits—the role, and after Glimpse One, we know that we are in for an actor's holiday. This is not remotely to say that he is less than good: but it's the kind of part that, for any actor of talent, let alone De Niro's talent, almost acts itself. Everything in the film is slanted to make De Niro's performance stand out, and it does. It's like Anthony Hopkins's homicidal genius in *The Silence of the Lambs* gone hillbilly and Pentecostal.

The ex-con begins slow. He does nothing illegal. He just makes his presence known to the lawyer, constantly. The lawyer—Nick Nolte, bespectacled and serious—applies for a restraining order. This doesn't help. We share Nolte's frustration and rising panic. We know things are going to get worse. Bloody. We can't wait.

Strick's script, adequately written throughout, peaks in a quasi-seduction scene between De Niro and the lawyer's young daughter. (Reminiscent of the long scene between Treat Williams and Laura Dern in *Smooth Talk*.) But like virtually all thriller scripts, this one uses realism only as a launchpad into the incredible. Let's concede that De Niro, absolutely illiterate when he went to prison, could come out conversant with law, Nietzsche, and Henry Miller. But Nolte blurts out threats to De Niro that all of us except Nolte—a lawyer!—know are being recorded. There are encounters in Nolte's home and on a houseboat that have nothing to do with believability. By that time we are at the place where a thriller says, "OK, we've been realistic up to now, to get your attention. Now all aboard for Movieland."

Jessica Lange plays Nolte's wife and does fairly well with a part that is doomed to some dullness. No matter how she and Scorsese and Strick try to alter the role, she ends up as one more wide-eyed female victim waiting for male rescue. The best performance after De Niro's, in the meatiest role after his, comes from Juliette Lewis as the daughter. Plenty of children and adolescents can mimic well; a few can act. Lewis, who has done films and TV, is one of them. No doubt Scorsese had a considerable hand in leading her through her experience and imagination to the troubled, subtly shaded candor of her performance; but she made it. Lewis's discoveries of self in the role are exceptional.

Gregory Peck, Robert Mitchum, and

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Martin Balsam, all of whom were prominent in the first *Cape Fear*, play minor roles here. Pleasant souvenirs. The original score by Bernard Herrmann has been reworked by Elmer Bernstein and does its job well, especially in keeping the film suspenseful during quieter moments.

But the film is Scorsese, more and less. With Freddie Francis (who did *Glory*) as cinematographer, Scorsese uses Panavision for the first time and is thoroughly easy with it, exploiting its reach, never straining to fill the frame. With his customary editor, Thelma Schoonmaker, Scorsese slams the picture into action and keeps it there. He finds ways to jog the expected shot into freshness. When the girl gets a cajoling call from the ex-con, we cut to De Niro, who, instead of snuggling cozily on the phone, is hanging upside down on an exercise bar, flexing his leg muscles as he phones. At bottom Scorsese keeps scenes boiling by intensifying pressure on his actors; but camera sharpness and knife-edge editing carry the pressure through.

Some of his devices obtrude, even as they work. Several times he has a character walk right into the camera to black out a shot, as a way of cutting to the next shot. Very often he begins a new scene with a loud sound. (Something like the way he used pop songs in *GoodFellas*.) A few devices not only obtrude but don't work, like the use of X-ray shots. Possibly they're meant to suggest hidden fear that is then fleshed; but they're only distracting.

What it all comes to is that Scorsese has spent his considerable talent trying to make a Scorsese film out of a formula. (*The Desperate Hours, The Petrified Forest*... a long, long line of plays and films about ordinary folks at the mercy of criminals.) He doesn't quite succeed: the formulaic load is too heavy. Next, however, Edith Wharton. With Wharton, perhaps, he'll make us change our idea of what a Scorsese film is.

Note. A recent issue of *Variety* disclosed that foreign TV interests are investing heavily in Hollywood—mostly Japanese corporations but also French and Italian ones. Billions of dollars. The new chairman of Paramount Pictures comes from TV. Can these various TV backgrounds fail to have an effect on American filmmaking? That is the wan question that pipes up in the worried mind.

Film theaters have lately seemed to be more awash in junk than usual. Even Hollywood people have said so. Can it be that film theaters are being used more and more as conduits to cassette life in the video shops? If so, won't this new shift in ownership amplify the trend? It's a grim possibility—the film theaters of the nation, of the world, becoming to the video business what sneak previews have been to film theaters: tryouts en route to the prime destination. •

True Grit

BY MINDY ALOFF

Blood Memory by Martha Graham

(Doubleday, 280 pp., $25)

Martha: The Life and Work of Martha Graham by Agnes de Mille

(Random House, 510 pp., $30)

If Martha Graham's career could be contracted to three words, they would be, "Movement never lies." The notion of bedrock truth is intrinsic to any account of Graham's life and work; it is the foundation of her art and the justification of her mystique. All of her formidable energy, all of her gifts for conceptual play, emotional drama, and narrative surprise, were harnessed to one searing end, and that was to expose the Big Lie. At least this is what you believe if you fall under Graham's spell (and I speak from personal experience).

To most people who know her repertory, the Big Lie is sexual repression, but for Graham—at least for Graham in her mid-90s, when she put together her autobiography called *Blood Memory*—the object of exposure seems to have been a

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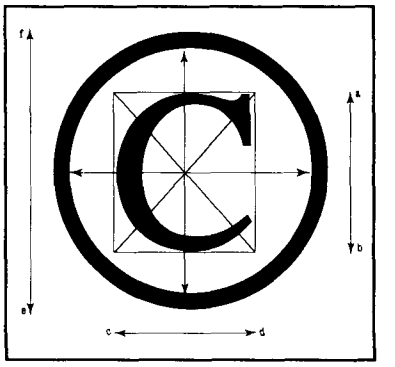

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more fundamental dishonesty. "I know my dances and technique are considered deeply sexual," she writes, "but I pride myself in playing onstage what most people hide in their deepest thoughts." This is consistent with Graham's dances of the past decade: no matter how disappointing one may find them—and the depths of that disappointment may be oceanic—their most discomfiting imagery has concerned not the self-deception of desire, but rather the larger inauthenticities of identity, which are to be peeled away to the core.

In Graham's last fully completed ballet, *Maple Leaf Rag* (1990), she seemed to peel away even her own legend, parodying the characteristic mirthlessness of her dances, her essential indifference to musical structure, and especially her obsession with costumes, which she practically fetishized as structural elements of the stage picture. (In the final move of *Maple Leaf Rag*, the male consort of the Graham figure casually rips away her overskirt as he scrambles offstage, leaving her in her dancer's skin of yellow practice clothes, a figurative nude.)

In Graham's last, unfinished choreographic fragment, which the Graham company mounted this year as *The Eyes of the Goddess*, one sees figures adopt masks that become their faces, and then transfer those mask-faces to other figures. The actual movement ideas of the piece are so slurry that the image of putting on and taking off a face the way you open and close a suitcase doesn't provide the chill that it might have provided with the Graham company of forty or fifty years ago; but there is one delicious detail about those masks. The dancers hold them to their actual faces from the inside by clamping down their teeth on special protrusions near the mask-mouth. A spokesman for the company could not confirm that Graham had helped to develop the prop's engineering, but the conceit of holding on to your face by the skin of your teeth sums up much about Graham's gusto, grit, and grotesque self-absorption. Better to kill her than to wound her, because wounded she could draw blood. In her book she recounts a performance when her partner Ted Shawn accidentally dropped her on her head, and she sank her incisors into his arm. And Shawn was by no means the last person to find that his vital fluids were being bled away by her at an alarming rate.

The amazing thing is that nearly everyone, men and women, accepted her physical and verbal abuse as if she dispensed it by divine right. As long as you were old enough to be seduced, Graham was young enough to put you in her pipe and smoke you. And yet she also liked to see the extent to which other people could unleash themselves. The former Graham dancer Ethel Winter recently recalled that it was only when she got angry in front of Graham that "[Graham] knew she could give me the Aphrodite role. At a performance in the Far East, everything went wrong and when I got off that stage, I ripped my costume off and started stamping on it and cussing. And I was horrified when I saw Martha standing right beside me. She looked at me and said, 'Good girl, Ethel!' "

Graham's views on anger—especially on her own anger—were characteristically admiring. "When I lose my temper it is like a witches' sabbath—the Black Mass," she wrote in her journal in 1950 (which was published in 1973). "The world is given over to the powers of darkness and the rule of the blood—It is Kali in her terrible aspect—It is Shiva the destroyer—It is Lucifer." Nor was she being entirely hyperbolic; anger appears to have made her physically stronger, and on more than one occasion she tore a telephone right off the wall. To restrain or to repress the violent feeling, after all, would have been hypocrisy. The journal entry continues: "Strength comes from a use of the muscles—The athletes of God wrestled and grew strong. They chose, and they acted. What I do must be done in full sunlight of awareness." Her mission, she decided, was to "learn a means of changing the mood—the state of consciousness—without double-mindedness or [thought] of gain." In Graham's world, one did not strive to tame the beast within, but to alter the weather and depopulate the countryside so that the holy wildness could stalk the land uncaged.

MARTHA GRAHAM BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Graham was born in 1896, one of the facts about her life that was subject to continual alteration. (In *Blood Memory* she relates that, during her wedding to Erick Hawkins in 1947, "Erick couldn't resist looking over my shoulder to see what age I would put down, but I was consistent. I took off the same fifteen years that I always had.") Her father was fifteen years older than her mother whose delicate build and winsome beauty permitted her to add something like a favorite child's privilege to her maternal authority. Martha was the eldest—and apparently the least conventionally attractive—of Jennie and George Graham's four children, three girls and a boy. (The brother died in childhood.) Graham adored her father, quoting him throughout her life, but although she continued to make

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dutiful summer visits to her mother until her mother's death, her feelings toward Jennie are marked by ambivalence and omission. "My attitude toward mother became one of adoration and care, but never petition. We were not supposed to intrude upon anything she had."

Agnes de Mille suggests patterns of jealousy between Graham and her sisters, but could jealousy of her mother also have been important to Graham's development? One thinks of *Cave of the Heart*, her ballet in which Jason bolsters his new child-bride on his thigh while his discarded wife, Medea—the Graham role—seethes with an all-consuming envy. (The usual psychological interpretation is that *Cave*, made in 1946, dates from the period when Graham's love for Hawkins was driving her to works of genius and, since Hawkins exhibited a roving eye for younger dancers, to bouts of crazed woe; but the outlandish, infantile intensity of Medea's reaction cannot be explained solely by the experience of middle age.) The other key member of the Graham household was an Irish maid named Lizzie. Her role as a big-boned, all-loving observer in a family whose female stars were petite—Graham grew to all of 5'2"—has been immortalized in the tall-gal choruses and the towering nurturers of Graham's dances.

From the time that she was a toddler, Graham was subject to what were called her "black Irish rages," and she seems never to have been encouraged to manage them. Instead, her intimates throughout her life ignored her bad behavior or kowtowed to it, waiting for the squall to pass. Graham was not only the serious and studious eldest daughter of a physician father whom she cherished, she was also a boiling center of physical and emotional energy that she was constantly forced to contain in public, and that would explode demonically in private.

When she was a teenager, Graham's father moved the family from Pittsburgh to Santa Barbara. (Graham died this year, and if you want a sense of her ninety-six years in historical terms, dwell on the extraordinary fact that she spent part of her youth playing with the children of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, who, following his release from Devil's Island, settled in California to deal in real estate.) Her father is one of the rare subjects in her book—herself included—who is presented positively, for what he was and did rather than for what he wasn't and didn't do. She seems to have associated him with the idea of permission. "I began to answer my father back a great deal," she writes. "He liked that, actually. I believe he encouraged that quality, which he would have expected in a son. My father would say to me, 'If you're going to make a scandal, Martha, make it a big one. You are capable of being very, very scandalous!' "

One day Dr. Graham dressed his daughter in a dark, matronly dress and hat ("more for a 50-year-old woman, but that is what he knew"), pinned a corsage of violets on her dress, and took her to the Mason Opera House, where she saw Ruth St. Denis perform some of her most famous solos. That was it: Martha had to dance. She also adopted the belief that Ruth St. Denis was a goddess. Eventually Graham became a student at Denishawn, the school that St. Denis and her husband, Ted Shawn, ran in Los Angeles.

Her relationship to Shawn was straightforward, at least according to de Mille: he thought that Graham had talent and presence, and gave her opportunities to perform, while she found him useful and fair—but also a hypocrite, especially where the projection of sexuality was concerned. Shawn flirted with male Denishawn students while fashioning solos for himself as an

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ancient warrior and hero, for which neither Graham nor de Mille forgive him, although it remains unclear whether his sin was mediocrity, homosexuality, or infidelity to Miss Ruth. Graham's link to St. Denis herself was rather more complicated. St. Denis had no faith in Graham as a dancer and passed her along to Shawn; but she seemed to want Graham around her personally, and so Graham would be called on to dress Miss Ruth's hair, or to accompany Miss Ruth to church, or to look after Miss Ruth's aged mother. St. Denis also called on Graham to work on Denishawn's elaborate costumes, and although Graham finally had to put a stop to the load of seamstress work, one cannot help concluding that the experience contributed to her famous perfectionism about her costumes later, and to their greatness.

Graham left Denishawn in 1923. She performed for the Greenwich Village Follies. She taught at various places in and out of New York. She worked with actors, in the classroom and onstage. But all the while she was making dances. At first they were circumscribed in scale: in 1926 she made solos, trios, and a duet. Yet in that year alone she turned out twenty-nine pieces. They bore names such as "Danse Languide" and "Desir," and were set to music by composers such as Schumann and de Falla. By 1931, however, she was composing for herself and larger groups. The dances had titles like "Two Primitive Canticles" and "Dithyrambic," and the composers included Wallingford Riegger and Arnold Schönberg.

Graham's first masterpiece is usually considered *Primitive Mysteries* from 1931, to a score by her adviser and erstwhile lover Louis Horst. (*Heretic* of 1929 and *Lamentation* of 1930 are close seconds.) Horst had a passion for preclassic music and for modernist composers, as well as an intolerance for most of the Romantics. He also introduced Graham to the large, tragic, architectonic landscape of the Southwest. His belief that a composition must be rigorously and visibly ordered seems to have elicited from Graham her great, early primitivist style—similar in effect to that of the Mexican muralists of the 1930s. In dance terms, it is a style that accents the thrust of the heel and the expressive geometry of the hand. In *Primitive Mysteries*, the all-woman chorus moves as if their torsos were blocks of stone; you feel that a single contraction could shatter them. They live as feeling beings in their sanctifying gestures and plummeting footfalls. Their obliquity also provides a frame for Graham's own role, the central madonna figure who is comparatively delicate and flushed with life.

While she was creating a repertory, Graham was also carving out a technique. There are two things about Graham's technique that the non-dancer may want to know. One is that, unlike classical ballet or tap or folk dancing, it is based on emotion rather than locomotion. It offers kinetic analogies for interior states. In order to execute these analogies, a dancer does not need to feel the states that they represent at the moment of performance; but a performer cannot get the most out of these movements without somehow reliving—it's not exactly acting—the way their psychological motivation might express itself. Movement may never lie in a Graham ballet, but neither will movement alone give the truth. If Graham's work doesn't strike you with its emotional meaning, it will seem to have failed.

The other distinction of Graham's technique is that it was based on Graham's own body, on her unique physical gifts, which included an unusual looseness in the pelvic region coupled with great strength in the back and the torso. The archetypal drama for her, the drama of two forces in confrontation, was physiological before it was theatrical, whether it was embodied in the rhythm of contraction and release, of the soloist and the group, of woman facing off man, or, as in the 1935 solo *Frontier*, of the human figure addressing the surrounding space (a space made to seem infinite by Isamu Noguchi's brilliant doodle of a set).

Erick Hawkins was introduced to Graham in 1936 by Lincoln Kirstein, with whose ballet company, Dance Caravan, Hawkins was then performing. Hawkins became the first man to dance with Graham's company, and he seems to have precipitated crises, good and bad, on every level. Graham began to use balletic turnout, and the heavy, Easter Island quality of the women's dancing was lightened and made more lyrical. (I learned some of this from a new book published by Chicago Review Press called *Martha Graham: The Evolution of Her Dance Theory and Training 1926-1991*, edited by Marian Horosko.) Hawkins, moreover, provided Graham with a partner, and she began to make roles for herself that dramatized the sexual implications of men lifting women. By all accounts, including her own, Graham was so deeply in love with Hawkins that he refocused her sense of herself in the world: her characters became complicated, even vulnerable. And the literary flavor of her dances moved into the nineteenth-century universe of the Brontës and Emily Dickinson.

Immediately after World War II, the mythic Graham burst into view. The years 1946 through 1948 probably occasioned her most inspired sequence of mature creativity: *Dark Meadow*, *Cave of the Heart*, *Errand into the Maze*, *Night Journey*, *Diversion of Angels*. All of these dances showcase dramatic meetings (and matings) of the sexes, but the effects of those meetings on the heroines range from jealousy to a renewal of inner strength: taken together, the works occasion a full diapason of feeling. Graham's reputation could rest on these dances, period.

Except that nothing about Graham rested, period. After a disastrous injury to her knee and a cataclysmic break with Hawkins in 1950, she went on to make capable repertory pieces, even some excellent ones. (The decade came to a climax for her in 1958, with her evening-length *Clytemnestra*.) The ballets that I have seen from this period are full of exciting ideas, and the Noguchi sets can be the very image of enchantment. Still, they are letdowns to anyone who comes to them from the works of the preceding decades. The essential stuff of dancing, after all, is movement, and after the 1950s Graham's movement was pretty well encoded; how it looked and what it signified were essentially fixed. And after Graham retired from the stage at the end of the 1960s, even the theatrical ideas started to stiffen up. The most interesting thing about the last, late fragment called "The Eyes of the Goddess" is the fluidity of the stage picture, though the effect isn't of suppleness but of flood, overwhelming what once was gloriously habitable.

The idea that "movement never lies" permeated Graham's dancing and her writing. Her father is the purported source of the famous line, as Graham tells it in her memoir:

> When my father was in with a patient and others were waiting, I would sit nearby to see how they moved; sometimes I'd tell them stories. I don't think they welcomed either my attendance or my inventions. One particular patient, a 17-year-old woman, was invited to supper with us. When we were all seated at the dining room table, we bowed our heads and Grandmother said grace.
>
> Oddly enough, Father's patient said little, and as I recall barely looked up from her plate, preferring to sit slightly slouched, bent into that awkwardness, as if folding herself into her own body, that difficult habit of behavior. She appeared fidgety, a bit nervous. I'd look at my father, but his look, in kindness, gave no clue to her behavior. Later, after my father had accompanied her back to her own home, I asked him why she behaved in this way,

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and he replied that she was not well, and her body was telling us so. Each of us tells our own story even without speaking. "Movement," he later told me when I asked more questions, "never lies."

Not until several years ago, when the choreographer Senta Driver asked for help in tracking down the credo, did I realize how infrequently the sentence itself has appeared in the voluminous Graham literature. Driver wanted to check that it was indeed Graham's father who said it, and discovered an anecdote in a book by Ernestine Stodelle, a former Doris Humphrey dancer and an observer of Graham's work since 1929. In Stodelle's telling, Graham's father addresses his remarks—which do not include the famous words themselves—to Martha directly:

> One day she was shocked to hear the observant Dr. Graham suddenly remark, "Martha, you're not telling me the truth!"
>
> Wide-eyed, she stammered, "How do you know?"
>
> "I can tell by the way you are moving," was his candid retort.
>
> That was Martha's first lesson in psychology—a notable one considering that her father was a specialist in nervous diseases.

According to a footnote, Stodelle learned the story from Graham herself in conversation.

I mention Driver's research not least to give the flavor of dance as an academic field: imagine a poet who, despite diligent looking, couldn't find textual evidence of Eliot's "objective correlative." I want also to give a sense of the challenge that any writer on dance faces when he or she starts to stalk the "truth." Graham is a particularly good, that is, a particularly tricky, subject because she has been exhaustively observed, as dancers go. Under the single heading of "Graham, Martha" (there are also headings on specific aspects of her work), the current catalog of the Dance Collection at the New York Library of the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center lists 1,136 items, among them clippings, books, photographs by the bushel, and 132 films.

Somewhere among them, perhaps, is an ironclad explanation of who first said to Graham that "Movement [or the body] never lies." I haven't found it. One wants to embrace Graham's own version: it's the most vivid one in print, it says exactly what one is prepared to know, and it comes from the horse's mouth. But a question nags. If a line that has been so famous for so long is not of shaky attribution, then why have Graham's principal biographers refrained from including it? (Agnes de Mille gives yet another version of the story—like Stodelle's, and also without the famous words.) Which is true, Stodelle's Graham or Graham's Graham? For the difference between them is subtle and interesting. The upshot of Stodelle and de Mille is that movement reveals guilt: movement never lies, though words do. The upshot of Graham is that movement reveals condition: movement never lies, though an observer may have to be taught what to ask of it. The biographers present Graham's discovery as the product of a moral investigation, while Graham speaks of it as a diagnostic tool in a clinical sense. Perhaps, in her long lifetime, she came to understand it both ways.

In the preface to her book, de Mille notes that Graham "always wanted to leave behind a legend, not a biography," and so "she destroyed personal documents, letters, records, even books and articles.... The past was to be obliterated and reshaped according to Martha's will and by whatever testament she chose to leave." As you might guess from the intimacy of her book's title and from the authority of its tone, de Mille's portrait of Graham is close up and personal, from a ringside seat. It is also

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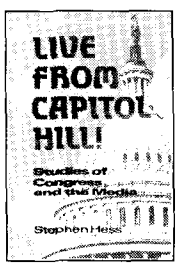

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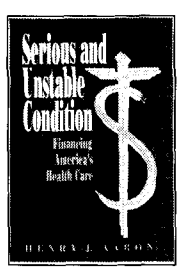

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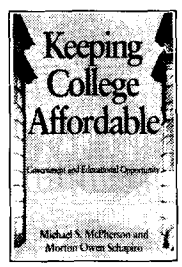

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impregnated with time. At the behest of an editor, de Mille began this book in the late 1960s, but she had begun to observe Graham in the 1920s. Their relationship is probably one of the closest and most complex that Graham had as an adult, outside of her love affairs.

Graham and de Mille were friends (Graham introduced de Mille to the man whom de Mille would marry), and as friends they were emotional equals; but they were also colleagues, and there the pans of the scale went awry. De Mille's background was primarily ballet, which Graham first scorned and then absorbed. De Mille was in awe of Graham's work, but Graham refused to permit de Mille to study with her. (Perhaps she knew that it would kill the friendship.) De Mille gained commercial success, but there was no doubt that Graham, who had to be supported by individual patrons, enjoyed the succès d'estime.

Recently Arlene Croce has remarked on the subtle correspondences in the backgrounds of the two women (both were late starters as dancers, for example), and it may well have been these latent convergences that helped to forestall the blows that a friendship may suffer from inequities of money or fame. Forestall, but not dissipate entirely. In *Blood Memory*, Graham characterizes de Mille as a staunch friend and a gallant fighter with a tendency to say the wrong thing, and who, on at least one occasion, was not above trying to use Graham's eminence to further her own career.

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And in an interview last summer, de Mille said that "I'd get mad at Martha because of things she'd do. She did some *very* dreadful things to me; I didn't write about them. She's hurt everyone, as well as helped. I think Martha was *the* most selfish person I ever knew."

De Mille's hurt is large, and she cannot help discharging it into her book, which is in turn hurt by it. Her tone can be so peremptory that it induces skepticism about what is on the page. Still, I'm willing to pay the price of skepticism for the chance to see so much of the private Graham, who (it turns out) did not always speak like an oracle or a fortune cookie and who had a real sex life with all the attendant delight and misery, the sex life of a human being rather than a goddess or a puma. Most rare, de Mille's Graham knew how to have fun. I know of no other biography of a dancer that probes so far into the living connection between the artist's life—especially the inner life—and the shape of the work. This book is an instance of the right person doing the right job at the right time; and although there will be arguments about the accuracy and the moral shading of certain passages—particularly de Mille's rather scathing treatments of the men in Graham's life—one cannot deny that *Martha* gives more even of its villains than many a portrait of Graham does of its heroine.

The major theme is Graham's insistence on all forms of truth, no matter how cruel. Indeed, it is when Graham begins to rely on choreographic devices she knows will work that de Mille seems to see her art decline. For Graham's example should properly teach that the search for truth entails fresh pain and fresh sacrifice, the laying bare of one's deepest self unflinchingly, as if one were boring through living tissue into bone. De Mille's Graham was a saint. "She gave everything to her work, withheld nothing, kept nothing apart." De Mille continues:

> She could do this because she knew she was there to be used. There was no false modesty. The process had nothing to do with modesty. Saints do not doubt their own worth. Whatever their verbalizations, they are consumed. The power blinds them. There is no self left to be modest about. When one has experienced this communion with power, one is never the same again. One is selfless; one is wholly selfish. One can become cruelly brutal, because nothing else matters.

Whether or not you follow de Mille into this devotion, this is certainly an arresting definition of sainthood. *Martha* continually forces the reader to ask big questions just to keep on keel. Was Graham a masochist? Did her husband Hawkins deliberately contribute to her knee injury in Paris in 1950? What were Graham's deepest feelings about her mother? What were the root sources of her famous fury, and could she have been the artist she was if she had been able (or willing) to control it? If her passionate involvement with Hawkins had lasted, would her choreography have stayed on its spellbinding artistic level? Is it possible to make great dances about truth and feeling without the shipwreck of erotic love?

One of de Mille's best descriptions of Graham's style of movement comes near the end of the book, in the form of a criticism that itemizes its flaws:

> When we first saw Graham's works we were so struck by the force of her ideas and the fresh aesthetics of the style that limitations were overlooked. After fifty years, the ideas remained striking and sound, if no longer startling, but the style, although pure, seemed crippled. It was internal and vertical, rooted to a single spot; the dance neither moved nor traveled transversely. There were no linkings, no exchanges, no enchaînements, Graham's dancing having been designed for the solo figure, or a soloist and a partner, or soloists and an antiphonal chorus, but never for a communal group; equal figures did not weave or exchange or move anywhere except inwardly, seldom outward. And there was incorporated none of the commonday vernacular steps like skipping, which rest the mind and are familiar and comforting.

So what did Graham sacrifice by being a dancing saint? External presentation, horizontality, travel, fluency, connectedness (kinetic and social), saltatory pleasures. She renounced all the qualities that make people love the dance of the four little swans in *Swan Lake*, or a Scottish reel, or the lindy. She gave up the qualities that some say constitute the essence of dancing. She surrendered all those elements that make dancing a comfort to behold as well as to do, because comfort protects one from the truth of existence.

De Mille presents Graham's moral choices so decisively that it is possible to imagine the intensity of those rare moments when Graham caved in and tried on the idea of compromise. Without a sense of the obdurate, self-denying saint, for example, the character of the bride in *Appalachian Spring* seems merely coy. Only when you can feel something of the sleepless days and nights in the studio, during which Horst lashed Graham through the maze of her own unconscious, and Graham then lashed her devoted acolytes toward perfection, does the sight of a man and a woman

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merely square dancing to "'Tis the Gift to Be Simple" have any resonance. Graham believed in fate, in doom, in one's birth to the moment—but she did not believe in gifts, and the very notion of one of her characters actually landing, through some sort of grace, in a "valley of love and delight" seems as touching in its hope as Anne Frank's belief that people are really good at heart. The quality of resistance, of negation, must be found in the performance of the Bride for the ballet to affect you. (In my experience at the Graham company, it has been missing for some years. This past season, I heard a man walking into the lobby after a performance say, "*Appalachian Spring*? Too sugary for my taste.")

Graham thought of herself as a dancer, and she wanted to be remembered as a dancer rather than as a choreographer. Her intellect was capacious (and rapacious) but for most of her career it was hardly disinterested. She made dances so that she herself could perform; and works in which she did not appear were useful because they permitted her to rest between numbers. When she spoke about dancing, especially to the public, she did so from a place inside the fantasy of her work. She was the tyger burning bright, and her meat was metaphor. But among the things that de Mille emphasizes—how grateful one would be for this point alone!—is the chasm that can separate what a dancer says she is doing from what actually is being done. On the basis of her own experience as a dancer, a choreographer, and an observer of dancing, de Mille takes educated issue with Graham's oracular manner. "In Graham's technique all falls are to the left side," she writes, "because, as she said, the weight of the heart is on the left side. Maybe so; but to this dancer it seems that it really was because her left leg and thigh were stronger and more stretched out. Whatever reason, her dancers often have a lopsided appearance."

In a similar spirit, de Mille relates a wonderful anecdote from an interview that she conducted with the choreographer Glen Tetley, a former member of Graham's company. Around 1958 Graham called Tetley and Paul Taylor, another company member, to a rehearsal. She told them to stand at the barre and take a second position plié. Then she made a long and flourishing correction that included lines like, "The carriage of your head is very important. It must be lifted almost as if something were elevating your ears and you released the animal brain back here, so that your movement is totally strong and male." Tetley recalled:

> I thought, "The goddess! The mother of God! Yes!" And Paul Taylor said, steadily and quietly, "What a pile of shit!" Martha stopped dead in her tracks and then she continued out. I said, "Paul, how can you say that?" and he replied,"Well, that's what it is. Why can't she just say keep your back straight and your chin up?"

I saw Martha Graham dance once, around 1968, in the title role of a ballet called *The Witch of Endor*. I remember her as an enormous bun of dark hair, and a long-jawed and somewhat ravaged face floating above a voluminous cape that seemed to shrink or to dilate with cinematic fluency. This was hardly a favorable moment for Graham, who was nearing the end of her performing career and protesting it bitterly by giving performances of parts that, despite their reduced material, she had to fake to get through. It was also a time when a generation of young choreographers was turning its back on her theatrical wisdom, which it associated with falsity of several kinds. The truth of her performance in 1968 was her appetite to be onstage: a necessary truth for a dancer, but not a sufficient one.

In the years since, I have come to be persuaded that at her peak in the 1930s and '40s Graham's dancing was intensely spontaneous in effect, and her dances saturated with radiance. The photographs of Barbara Morgan, Soichi Sunami, and Imogen Cunningham help one to arrive at such a conclusion. (Both these books contain liberal samples.) So do the reviews of Stark Young, Edwin Denby, and John Martin, as well as the exquisite and breathless chapter on Graham in de Mille's *Dance to the Piper*. ("She has probably the strongest back and thighs in the world. She has an instep under which you could run water . . .") And so do the dances from that period, especially the ones like *Primitive Mysteries* or *El Penitente* that are associated with the Southwest, a region of North America that acted on Graham's imagination as fruitfully as the soil of Southern France acts on grapes. This past season I saw Baryshnikov, as El Penitente, catapult straight upward from a standing position without appearing to bend his knees, yet keeping his feet flexed midair, so that he seemed to have been blown a yard or so off the ground, like a pingpong ball sitting on a jet of water. Dancing doesn't get much more magical; it is the dance that must provide the dancer with the chance to cast the spell.

Still, I know people for whom Graham is dead history, and for them all I can recommend is a seven-minute silent, black-and-white film at the Dance Collection. It shows Graham dancing

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her solo *Frontier* sometime in the 1930s. The first startling thing about her is how much she looks like our contemporary. In her ankle-length jumper with slashed armholes, and her man-tailored, oversized white shirt, and her sleek, shoulder-length hair held back from her brow by a simple headband, she could have stepped from the pages of the current Tweeds catalog. The second startling thing is the consistency of her concentration. When she bends to one side, the foot of the opposite leg remains as vital as if it were guided by a local brain. When she lifts an arm, the effort is so specific to the desired action that the rest of her body seems like a Kabuki stagehand for the working limb.

Everything that de Mille talks about—the feet, the amazing left leg extension, the strength of back and thigh, the animal vitality—is visible in this celluloid relic, and has been consciously presented so that the eye cannot be confused. But the thing you might not be prepared for is the softness. Stark Young is supposed to have quipped that Graham looked as if she were going to give birth to a cube, but in *Frontier* you can see how even a jackknifing back fall has fluency, a slightly softened edge. This combination of softness and sinew is intoxicating, and reminds you that the truth of great dancing is always at least two distinct qualities in counterpoint, rather than a single one invariably deployed.

"Bodies give all kinds of false signals," Senta Driver wrote in her essay "Doctor Graham's Fallacy":

> A body will sometimes telegraph to the teacher that it knows what it is doing when in fact it does not. Some dancers have a certain kind of ease and flow, a certain blind instinct for facility that moves them correctly and smoothly as requested, with an air of experience and control that is utterly false. They can feel quite cut off from their own confident exterior, floundering painfully inside, not knowing what they are achieving and not gaining the knowledge they want. All the while they hear praise for what they didn't intentionally produce. Worse, they can inspire advanced-level corrections that presume they are ready for extra challenge.

Perhaps we just can't shake the belief that movement never lies as long as the subject of the movement is "floundering painfully inside." Before Martha Graham, this was not a subject for dancing. Today, for much modern dance, it is the only subject. If Graham were starting out today, it might be just the thing to put the bite on.

MINDY ALOFF, who contributes regularly to *The New Yorker*, is at work on a book called *Dance Ideas*, to be published by Hill & Wang.

The Long Goodbye

BY JONATHAN GALASSI

The Last Leopard: A Life of Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa by David Gilmour

(Pantheon, 223 pp., $22)

David Gilmour begins his short, evocative, and sophisticated life of the author of *The Leopard*, the swan song for the Sicilian ancien régime that has lost none of its pungency and popularity since its posthumous publication in 1958, with an anecdote that is guaranteed to arouse envy in any biographer. On a visit in the mid-1980s to the remains of the Palazzo Lampedusa in Palermo, which was destroyed during the American bombardment of the city more than forty years earlier, Gilmour stole into the ruins before dawn one morning and began to find his way among rooms that he could recognize from his subject's memoirs:

> Perhaps the most pathetic sight in the place was the wreck of the old library. Tattered shreds of green velvet lay among splinters of cornice and large chunks of plaster; from a pile of rusty chair springs stuck a faded parasol. Underneath the rubble, scattered pages of Lampedusa's favorite authors mixed with the remains of his library catalogue.... Buried among them, I found a number of more personal documents: photographs, ancestral correspondence, papers in his own handwriting, letters from his mother which testified to the closeness of their relationship.

What strikes the reader is not just the aptness of this image of dissolution for evoking the fate of a writer whose life and work personified the passing of an order, nor the revelation that nearly fifty years after World War II, parts of Palermo are still rubble. What is most stunning and telling in this scene is that while Lampedusa's world was long gone, the detritus of his life, the supposedly transitory evidence of his existence, was *still there*, embalmed by the relentless sun that the writer himself called "the true ruler of Sicily."

The Palazzo Lampedusa is not the only venue from the world of *The Leopard* to have disappeared. Cows no longer graze, as Gilmour saw them do, in the courtyard of the abandoned Villa Lampedusa outside Palermo, the summer retreat of Lampedusa's father's family, where the writer set his novel's first scene; a friend reports that it has recently become a discotheque. The country palace of Lampedusa's mother's family at Santa Margherita di Belice forty miles southwest of Palermo, which was the primary inspiration for the sprawling house at Donnafugata in the novel (its protagonist, Don Fabrizio, prince of Salina, remarks that "a palace of which one knew every room wasn't worth living in"), was demolished by an earthquake in 1968. When Lampedusa was a boy, it took his family, accompanied by maids, valets, accountants, cooks, and others, twelve hours to make the trip there by carriage and train, and the summer holidays often lasted from June to November.

The Leopard is in large part about how this way of life came to an end. Set in motion by the Napoleonic abolition of feudalism in 1812, the change was hastened by Italian unification and the simultaneous passing of Bourbon rule in Sicily after Garibaldi's conquest of the island in 1861, the very moment that Lampedusa chooses to begin his story. In this sense, the novel is not autobiographical. It is based, rather, on aspects of the life of the author's great-grandfather Giulio Tomasi, prince of Lampedusa from 1831 to 1885. Yet *The Leopard* serves so effectively as a mouthpiece for Lampedusa's beliefs, views, and reflections—about Sicily, about Italy, about history, politics, and human nature—that one cannot be faulted for classifying the impulse behind the book as largely self-expression. The book is the testament not of a person but of a class, perhaps of an entire society, on the verge of extinction.

Giuseppe Tomasi, who was destined to be the last prince of Lampedusa, was born in his grandfather's palace in Palermo on December 23, 1896. Some family members have attempted to trace the Tomasi back to Titus and the sixth-century Byzantine emperor Tiberius. The branch that came to Sicily from Capua in the sixteenth century, and acquired major land holdings in the

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south, was held in high esteem for its austerity and its religious devotion, unlike most of the Spanish-created Sicilian nobility, which Gilmour refers to as one of the least distinguished aristocracies of Europe. By the end of the seventeenth century, there were more than 100 Sicilian princedoms for a population of about a million. (The dukedom of Palma, the title that the writer was to hold from the passing of his grandfather in 1908 until his own father's death in 1934, gave the Tomasi sway over an obscure town on the southern coast that they had founded in the seventeenth century; Lampedusa itself was a nearly uninhabited island near the coast of Africa.)

My one quarrel with Gilmour's biography, otherwise a model of sympathy balanced by judiciousness and a firm command of its subject, is that he spends far too little time on the all-important history of the writer's family, which was undoubtedly the largest single factor in determining his character. Lampedusa has Don Fabrizio reflect on his death bed that "the significance of a noble family lies entirely in its traditions ... its vital memories." His work may be seen as the attempt of a childless man, the last of his line, to hand down essential knowledge, to provide a record, as he wrote in another context, of "a unique Sicilian world ... which now finds itself on the verge of disappearing without having had the good fortune to be preserved in any art form."

Tomasi's childhood—indeed, most of his adult life—was dominated by his intelligent, extroverted, and demanding mother. Beatrice Mastrogiovanni Tasca was one of six daughters of a noble family of Norman origin. Soon after Giuseppe's birth her only other child, a girl, died, and it appears that she may at times have conflated the two in her mind: her letters to Giuseppe when he was a soldier during World War I often refer to him in the feminine. A solitary, bookish childhood spent in the Palermo palace or at his mother's country house was followed by a brief period of schooling in Rome and at the *liceo* in Palermo. Giuseppe enrolled briefly in the law faculty at the universities of Genoa and Rome, but the war cut short his academic career. He saw action on the Austrian front, and after being demobilized in 1920 spent several months in bed recovering from severe exhaustion. There has been speculation that a war wound rendered him impotent. At any event, he broke off two engagements during this period.

Giuseppe seems also to have become impatient with Sicily, and as a young man he spent as much time as possible on the Italian mainland and in France and England, often in the company of his mother. Sedentary and shy, he soon settled into what was to be his sole lifelong occupation, a serious course of reading in literature, history, art, and architecture in the major European cultures. By his early 20s his familiarity with literature and history were so formidable that his cousins dubbed him *il mostro*, the monster. (The moniker might also have owed something to Tomasi's physical presence. Heavy and slow-moving, with the bulging eyes characteristic of the Lampedusas, he cut an unprepossessing figure, though later in life he gained in stature, reminding some observers of a retired general, or T. S. Eliot.) His reading, which included the minor as well as the major writers in French, English, German, and of course Italian, was to bear fruit eventually not only in *The Leopard*, but in lectures on French and English literature prepared for a small group of students in Palermo in the 1950s. (The English talks have recently been published in Italy, in two volumes totaling nearly 800 pages.)

The young Tomasi frequently visited London, where his uncle was the Italian ambassador, and where he was often erroneously received as the duke of "Parma." Like many Italians, he loved English understatedness, wit, and common sense, and he felt that he himself had an "English" temperament. He also admired the British political system, believing, as his student Francesco Orlando put it, that it was "the only form of progress by which the prosperity, prestige, and above all the vitality of his own social class could have been preserved."

It was in London in 1925 that Tomasi met his uncle's stepdaughter, Alessandra Wolf. Licy, as she was known, was the daughter of a Latvian baron of German origin who had been a czarist official in St. Petersburg. Attractive, bright, and like Giuseppe widely read, she had studied psychoanalysis and begun to practice. She had been married to an Estonian baron, but the union was later annulled; in 1932 she and Giuseppe were married in Riga, when he was 35 and she 37. Predictably, Licy's relationship with her mother-in-law soon became embittered. She was also homesick for Latvia and disliked Palermo. Within a year she was back at her beloved castle at Stomersee, exchanging visits with Giuseppe only for brief periods. By all accounts, their rapport was primarily intellectual. The times they enjoyed most were evenings spent reading to each other from their favorite authors. Until the war forced Licy to abandon Stomersee in late 1942 and join Giuseppe permanently in Sicily,

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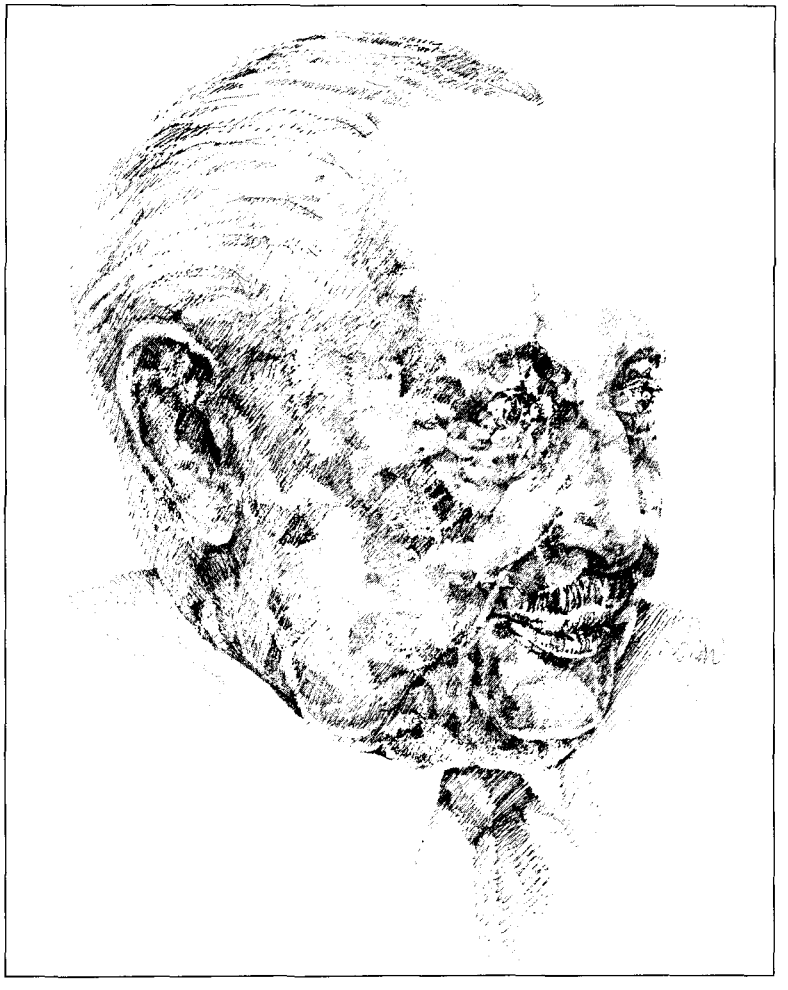
their marriage consisted mainly of a tepid exchange of letters.

Tomasi had become prince of Lampedusa on his father's death in 1934, and his life in Palermo before the war revolved around feeble attempts at managing his family's deteriorating affairs and keeping his mother company, with the relief of occasional visits to his Piccolo cousins, children of his mother's sister Teresa, at Capo d'Orlando on the northern coast. The madcap atmosphere of the Piccolo household was dominated by the eccentricities of Casimiro, an odd, gifted painter with a passion for the occult, and his brother Lucio, thickset and ugly, who vied with *il mostro* in erudition, and who was also a gifted writer. Lucio was Lampedusa's closest friend and his only real intellectual companion. Their deep and rivalrous relationship included endless competitions in the reciting of poetry and harsh criticisms of each other.

When Lucio's poems won a respected literary prize in 1954, the poet Eugenio Montale, who presented him at the award ceremony, called him "an accomplished musician, a student of philosophy, trained Greek scholar, knowledgeable in the entire field of European poetry, old and new . . . " The two cousins traveled together to Lombardy for the event, accompanied by an old retainer carrying a suitcase full of bed linens, since his masters disdained to sleep in sheets that were not their own. Lampedusa, wearing a hat and overcoat in the summer heat, spoke hardly a word; he was naturally reticent, and like many Sicilians he was diffident in the presence of mainland Italians. Still, he did not fail to notice the self-satisfaction of figures like Montale and the critic Emilio Cecchi, who comported themselves (as he told a friend) with the "unmistakable air of people who know their own importance, the air of marshals of France."

The largely demolished Palazzo Lampedusa was unrestorable after the war, though the prince's mother was able to spend her last days in a wing of it. Lampedusa never recovered from this overwhelming physical confirmation of his world's demise. In 1947, he bought a house in the nearby Via Butera, "a curious mixture of grandeur and discomfort," according to Gilmour, which had the virtue of having once belonged to his great-grandfather. Licy saw patients there (she was the only female Freudian psychoanalyst in Italy in the postwar period). But Lampedusa, though he had two libraries, one for literature and the other for history, spent most of his time haunting bookstores or reading in his favorite caffè.

It was the success of Lucio's poems, along with the rereading that Lampedusa did for his lectures on French and English literature, that finally impelled him to begin to write seriously, in his late 50s, when he had only a few years to live. He had had an idea for a novel for more than twenty years: "twenty-four hours in the life of my great-grandfather on the day of Garibaldi's landing," he told his young friend and cousin Gioacchino Lanza, whom he was to make his heir. But this Joycean scheme soon became too confining, and the book gradually evolved into a series of chapters that eventually bring the action up to 1910, that is, fifty years after the unification.



LAMPEDUSA BY DAVID SCHORR FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

"Action" is in a way a misnomer, for very little happens onstage in *The Leopard*. Instead, we are given elaborate portraits of Lampedusa's characters, who are at once highly representative figures and finely etched individuals. Don Fabrizio Salina, proud, feeling, intellectual, resigned, "expresses my ideas completely," Lampedusa wrote to a friend. His main foil is Don Calogero Sedara, "the new man," a peasant of implacable flinty intelligence who is swallowing up the land, and with it the wealth, that the exhausted, will-less Salinas and their ilk are losing. Sedara's beautiful and ambitious daughter Angelica eventually marries Tancredi Falconeri, the prince's charming, opportunistic, and impoverished nephew—much of whose charm derived from the young Lanza, whose youth and vivacity brightened Lampedusa's last years.

These portraits, vividly realized and sensual (Lampedusa's appreciative depictions of sexuality make one wonder about Gilmour's implications of near impotence), are interleaved with long philosophical dialogues that allow the author to dilate his views on the history, the predicament, and the fate of Sicily through his characters' sophisticated sieves. The amalgam amounts to far more than a conventional historical novel. This is "a novel which happens to take place in history," as E. M. Forster put it. More precisely, its subject is history; its vehicles are historical characters imbued with the human traits that Lampedusa had spent a lifetime observing. Only a deeply learned student of Sicily's past could have created as rich a textured a setting for his musings.

And only a devotee of Stendhal, a sympathetic, interested, implicated participant in the human drama, could have given these ideas such teeming, nuanced life. Lampedusa considered *The Charterhouse of Parma* the greatest of all novels. "Written by an old man for old people," he wrote of Stendhal's seven-week masterpiece, "one has to be over forty before one can understand it.

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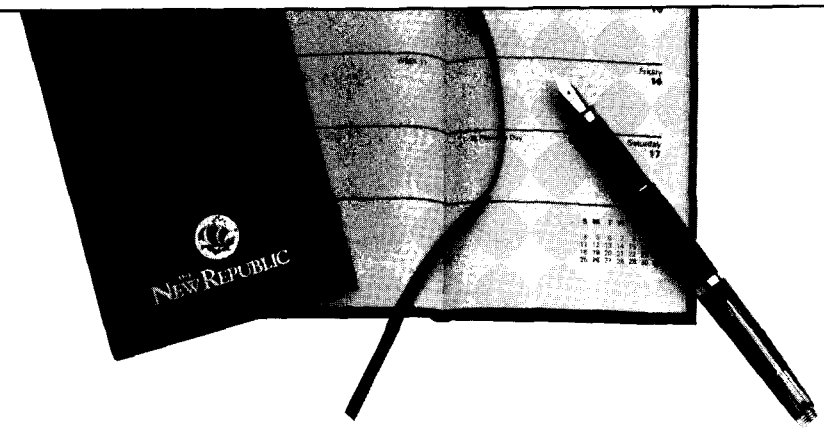
Then one sees that this book, bare even of artistic illusions, almost bare of adjectives, nostalgic, self-possessed, and gentle, is the summit of all world fiction." Except for the adjectives, he might have been describing his own work. Lampedusa admired Stendhal's "mellowness," just as he admired the "anti-melodrama" of his heroes Keats, Leopardi, and Shakespeare. (Unlike most Italians, Lampedusa detested opera, for its lack of subtlety and indirection.)

The artistic values that he espoused are in concert with the tone of resignation, the almost disinterested observation of the turning tide of history as it rises to engulf him. Listen to a small bit of Don Fabrizio's finest moment, his apostrophic peroration on the fatal narcissism of his fellow islanders:

> Sleep, my dear Chevalley, sleep, that is what Sicilians want, and they will always hate anyone who tries to wake them, even to bring them the most wonderful of gifts; and I must say, between ourselves, I have strong doubts whether the new Kingdom will have many gifts for us in its luggage. All Sicilian expression, even the most violent, is really wish-fulfillment: our sensuality is a hankering for oblivion, our shooting and knifing a hankering for death; our laziness, our spiced and drugged sherbets, a hankering for voluptuous immobility, that is, for death again; our meditative air is that of a void wanting to scrutinize the enigmas of nirvana. That is what gives power to certain people among us, to those who are half awake: that is the cause of the well-known time lag of a century in our artistic and intellectual life; novelties attract us only when they are dead, incapable of arousing vital currents; that is what gives rise to the extraordinary phenomenon of the constant formation of myths which would be venerable if they were really ancient, but which are really nothing but sinister attempts to plunge us back into a past that attracts us only because it is dead.

Lampedusa did not live to see his book published. He died in 1957, having written a number of stories and autobiographical pieces and having begun a new novel, *I gattini ciechi* ("The Blind Kittens"), about the rise of a former peasant family something like the Sedaras. *The Leopard* had been twice rejected by Elio Vittorini, the Sicilian writer who had considered the book for the publishing house of Einaudi, and who had found it "essayish" and "right wing." The next year, however, Giorgio Bassani, the author of *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis,* accepted it for another house, and upon publication the book became an international success.

Its historical validity was hotly debated in the polarized political atmosphere of postwar Italy. Writers on the left denounced it as reactionary, though this



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position lost force when the French Marxist Louis Aragon, one of the left's icons, called it "one of the great novels of all time" and praised Lampedusa's "merciless" critique of his own class. The local Sicilian reaction, too, was complex; there were heated reactions to the book's assault on Sicilian inertia and stagnation, and many in the aristocracy felt Lampedusa had betrayed and misrepresented his own. *The Leopard*, in sum, engendered all the cavils and polemics that a work that changes the landscape always does. By the late '60s a Sicilian writer of the next generation, who had originally claimed that *The Leopard* was written "without an understanding of history," was quoting Lampedusa as an authority at every turn.

The Leopard is the last major European novel that unembarrassedly presents the viewpoint of the aristocracy as a legitimate perspective on society as a whole. It is undeniable that Lampedusa's loyalty to his class and his ineradicable snobbery color his reading of the world, but this was part and parcel of his profound honesty, which also allowed him to acknowledge the strengths of the "new men" along with the failings of the old, to see clearly and hence accept the inexorable nature of change. As Luigi Barzini put it, Lampedusa's work portrays

> the inevitable decline, which cannot be halted, of the old virtues and graces that have grown useless but made life human even for humble people; the triumph of other qualities, rougher but essential in the modern world, which do not correct the old injustices but often merely show them up, make them unbearable, and replace them with others that are sometimes crueler and worse.

Lampedusa's view, unfashionable at the time, that the new order had proved as imperfect as, and less appealing than, the old, is a position that would find broader acceptance today. But it would be an injustice to turn him into an apologist for the right. Finally Lampedusa is not a partisan writer. As the Salinas watch their fortunes dissipate without lifting a finger to stanch the flow, so their creator documents the sea change of history from the Olympian perspective of his class but without self-interest.

Besides, the politics of a writer who survives often end up being the least important aspect of his or her work, as Auden recognized about Yeats. By now we may be far enough from the battleground of *The Leopard* to perceive that it is Lampedusa's own "mellowness," his Shakespearean embrace of all his characters, that makes him great. Few figures in postwar literature have the finesse and the serenity, the elevated objectivity, of Don Fabrizio Salina, a nineteenth-century survivor of a feudal order created with the benefit of an experience of modernity. Throughout a sedentary life spent reading and watching a world come apart, Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa weighed everything he observed with a quality of thought and feeling that led him to produce an immortal book. From the point of view of posterity, his long years of introverted solitude were anything but wasted.

JONATHAN GALASSI, editor in chief of Farrar, Straus & Giroux, is completing a translation of Eugenio Montale's major poetry.

The Vulture of Narcissism

BY ALEXANDER STAR

The Rise of Selfishness in America by James Lincoln Collier

(Oxford University Press, 309 pp., $24.95)

Morality is not best measured in decades, but there is no denying that moral trends are real. If the 1970s were the "Me Decade," the heyday of recreational sex and designer drugs, then the 1980s may soon be fixed in popular consciousness as an even less attractive era, when self-absorption culminated in happy greed, and principled avarice and recreational profit-chasing corrupted the nation. Of course, in the wake of an epidemic of hedonism or materialism, charges of selfishness are hurled across the political spectrum. Conservatives protest the demand for "rights without responsibilities" and deride phony welfare recipients and fraudulent artists who take from the public store without giving anything back in return except for physical and aesthetic crime. Liberals exhibit an entire gallery of greed: Wall Street malefactors, government appointees exploiting their offices for private gain, defense contractors and television advertisers deceitfully hawking their wares to winking Pentagon officials and wide-eyed children.

Attacking selfishness, politicians challenge the top, the bottom, and the margins of society, rarely the mass of middle-class voters whose self-interest both parties vigorously claim to promote. Beneath these charges and countercharges, however, there lies a more general criticism, a jeremiad broached by politicians in only the vaguest and the most painless words. It is that the American people as a whole have become afflicted with selfishness, that they have elevated the pursuit of money and pleasure over old habits of hard work and delayed gratification, that they have lost hold of traditional sources of sustenance such as families, schools, churches, and politics itself.

In his plainly titled book, James Lincoln Collier puts forward this deeper analysis, ambitiously attempting to combine cultural history, sociological analysis, and moral exhortation into an account and an indictment of our collective self-centered ways. Collier is a prolific writer best known for cantankerous biographies of early jazz figures. His study of Duke Ellington portrayed the great composer as a vulgar man cursed with little talent and less taste. This book endeavors to describe the American people with similar affection. They are an easier target, but the effort is not much more successful.

Criticism of American selfishness almost always longs for a community-centered world of the past. The Greek polis, the preindustrial family, and the cosmopolitan city of the nineteenth century have all been put forward in recent years as attractive occasions for nostalgia. Collier pines for a different, rather unexpected Golden Age. His good old days were the Victorian nineteenth century, when the American middle class was imbued with ideals of self-discipline and charity.

In order to aid our imaginations, Collier introduces us early on to some real-life Victorian-Americans: his aunts. These women, "who lived in a grand house on a hill, overlooking a row of what had once been the cottages of the workers their grandfather employed ... clung to the Victorian lifestyle in which they had been raised," never acknowledging the presence of sex or liquor in their midst, always serving family, church, and community. They are the

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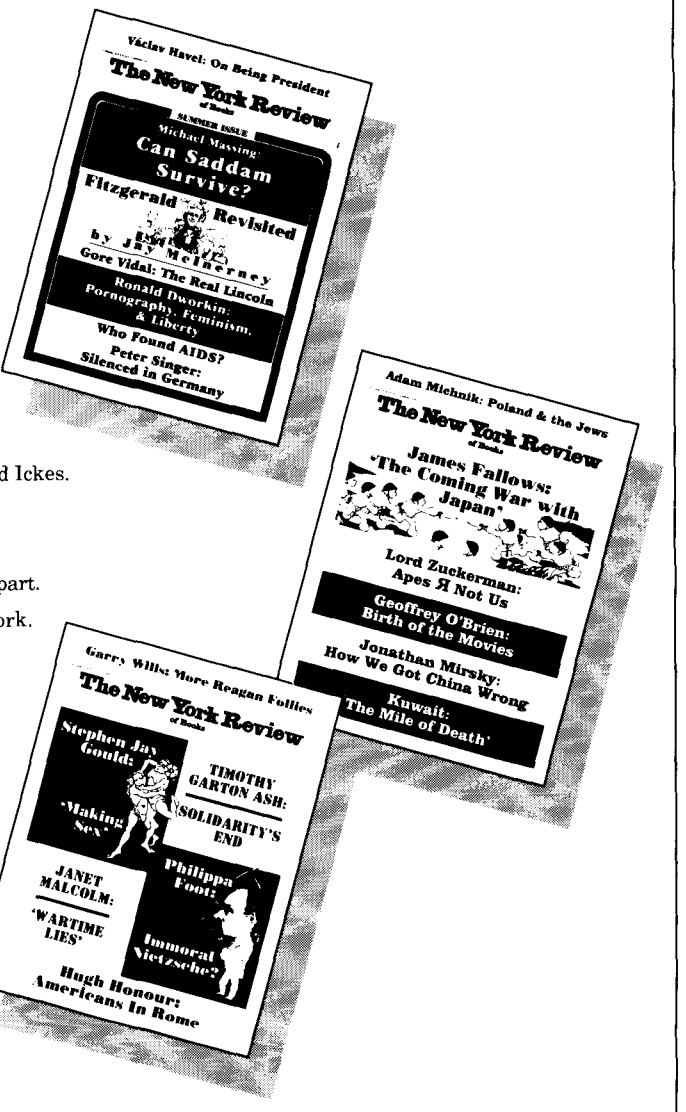
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heroines, the mascots, the figureheads of this book. They stand in stern judgment on all the bohemian radicals, all the vaudeville performers and radio and television technicians, all the businessmen and psychologists who eventually brought their proud world to its knees. When, in Collier's finale, "liberty weeps," it is hard not to imagine these women having to dry their eyes as well.

Collier arranges his book as a chronicle of social and moral collapse, a survey of the forces that have produced the passive, self-absorbed, isolated, hedonistic, greedy, irresponsible, and semiconscious American individual of today. He notes that rates of sexual activity, drinking, dancing, and gambling all tend to rise and fall together, providing a handy instrument with which to chart the tides of virtue and vice—a kind of ethical prime rate. From the start, this method begs some questions. The presence of "sensual pleasures" might indicate an absence of Victorian values, but does it indicate a "cult of the self"? What is "selfish," exactly, about dancing? Using his index of pleasure, Collier depicts eighteenth-century America as a society of alcohol-soaked agnostics and illegitimate children. But he never establishes what this "debauch" has to do with the larger themes of selfishness and community that guide his book. How, for instance, did an engaged political culture, one much admired by later advocates of community, flourish in such lusty times? No answer is given.

Like many who would rather exhibit the indecency they scorn than the decency they admire, Collier does not dwell too long on his vanished ideal. Victorian values, he writes, developed primarily in reaction to the "disorderly conduct of the eighteenth century." (In saying so, he sidesteps the analysis of how those values also developed in reaction to the strains and the possibilities of a growing market economy.) He locates Victorian America in a serene setting of "independent, scattered, self-sufficient family units." Here, "the relatively few strivers stand out in bold relief against a mass of farm people enmeshed in a web of family and community relationships in which subordination to the wishes of the group, rather than a spirited individualism, was the essential rule."

Even taken on its own terms, Collier's idealized view of Victorian community doesn't provide a moral anchor. His "web of family and community relationships" could also be a web of petty (and often selfish) intrigue, backtalking gossip, and strict conformity. When is "subordination to the wishes of the group" justified and when is it not? Which of the many different-sized groups that Americans belong to—family, town, region, race, nation—have the strongest case for subordination? And who speaks for a group, who defines its wishes? Collier doesn't address these questions; even to ask them, he implies, is to contribute to the "rise of selfishness in America."

Nor does Collier fully explore the discrepancy between the theory of Victorianism and its practice. Surely one must set his estimates that 40 percent of middle-class Victorian men visited prostitutes against the statistics that he cites concerning promiscuity in our own time. Evidently he believes that these men were doing little wrong so long as they respected the boundary between parlor and playhouse: better a double standard than no standards at all. But Victorian hypocrisy was not simply a regrettable lapse from high ideals, it was also a product of those ideals. The more emphasis that the Victorians placed on rigorous self-control in public, the more they developed extravagant fantasies of self-release in private, and often acted upon those fantasies with the many lower-class women available for hire. The more importance placed on protecting the innocent from "dangerous influences," the more lurid and alluring those influences became. And so on. It was an accounting of the costs of this systematized hypocrisy, and not an outbreak of selfishness, that led so many early twentieth-century thinkers to call for a loosening of Victorian codes of conduct.

Opposing Victorian community to the "cult of the self" that followed, Collier cannot recognize the individualistic values that *did* exist at the time. Emerson and Mill appear here only as genteel "Victorian reformers." Neither Emerson's charged vocabulary of self-creation nor Mill's powerful arguments for personal liberty are given any weight in his view of the period. Collier sees the "self-control" practiced by the Victorians as a form of self-abnegation of bending the self toward others; even "good manners," he notes, were seen as a form of "charity." But surely Victorian self-discipline had other components as well, not all of them incompatible with individualism.

Self-control promised the spiritual benefits of introspection and self-examination, the economic benefits of hard work and delayed gratification. In many ways, as Collier acknowledges, it

Salver

This bone china salver rimmed in gold.
A lump of earth—washed, patted,
purified, yes, but with the feel of the hand still in it,
bone burnt to white ash stirred in for strength,
trimmed and pressed to the mold.
The tall racks entering the ovens,
the poles and thin flat shovels for moving it
are tools to keep our own limbs out of the fire.
The long blast purges it.
Glazes clarify and seal, drawing it to a purpose.
It is set apart.

Preserved, it will preserve.
A tray for letters, a jelly dish,
a saucer for the prince's wine after a cautious foretaste—
its uses have gathered over time.
A disk of vitrified clay with a talisman in its name,
it arranges and protects.
Nothing soft need touch our fingers.
In the final stages of the finishing room,
it is handled again, but lightly,
a wreath of pure value applied with a camel's-hair brush.

Completed, it will outlast us.
Flames only temper it more.
Though it crack and sink through layers of dust,
it will never blend back into earth.
Shards will announce our unfathomable civilization
long after its function is lost.

Don Bogen

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could also become a form of pride, a badge of distinction, a way of distinguishing one's own purity from the impurity of others. In *Rebellion Against Victorianism*, Stanley Coben has recently written of how outsiders—blacks, Irish, whoever—"helped verify and vitalize the values taught to white, Protestant children at home and school." For Henry Seidel Canby, editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, recalling his childhood in the 1880s and '90s, the Irish were the evil, the disorganizing principle, which roused the opposite in us, and made us believe that there was something real in the precepts of our elders which usually droned above our heads." Self-control could make its practitioners feel good about themselves and superior to others. In other words, it could fulfill many of the same functions attributed to its alleged opposite, the modern consumer's search for self-gratification.

Collier casts two great villains that opposed, and finally overcame, the Victorian ethos. The first is the great industrial city and its rude immigrant masses. The second is the national system of entertainment and communications that developed once this city was established. The Victorians rose to the occasion of the first threat, taming the wild city through temperance drives, purity campaigns, and the social reforms of the Progressive era. But at the very moment when the Victorian values of the middle class appeared to have triumphed over the external threat of the saloon and the brothel, an internal enemy arose in the form of the vaudeville show, the player piano, the phonograph, the radio opera, the sitcom. "The middle class was simply seduced." Their values deserted them just when they needed them most.

Collier's best pages concern these early days of the entertainment industry, its transformation from a loose assemblage of itinerant minstrels into a rationalized system of national amusement. He memorably portrays the vice districts of Victorian cities as "entertainment communities" offering not only liquor and women but music and theater as well, entire "subcultures" consecrated to the "cult of the self." As proletarian pleasures spread into the middle class, Victorian values were pushed out. First came vaudeville shows and Tin Pan Alley songs. Then, following the "mechanization of entertainment," there came movies, phonograph records, and radio shows.

In order to enter the middle-class home, popular entertainment had to be domesticated. The significance of this process, for Collier, lies not in what was lost, but in what remained. The wolf of pleasure escaped the red light district in the sheep's clothing of art. For instance, while Tin Pan Alley songwriters were busy scraping the musical edges off of the blues and ragtime, they left a poison behind: the living-room standard became something "personal—a statement of something the singer felt strongly about, usually someone of the opposite sex." The "old narrative" lyric gives way to the mere setting of a mood, collapsing stable structures of memory and hope into an endless, restless present.

Emphasizing popular entertainment, Collier doesn't let the breakdown of Victorian values go by without setting up two additional targets: cities and intellectuals. Despite Progressive reforms, urbanization continued to loosen "personal ties," replace a "real future" with an "endless present," and give city-dwellers more "spare time" in which to "amuse themselves." In a mostly well-worn sketch of "New Thought, New Art," Collier argues that early twentieth-century intellectuals were united above all by their "idea that the needs of the self should come first." Attempting to establish this thesis, Collier goes so far as to include John Dewey among those thinkers who "were not particularly interested in reforming society." On the other hand, while "modern art was more random than anything that had gone before," Collier does admit that "many of the people in Joyce's *Ulysses* are significant to each other."

Once the forces of mass entertainment, urbanization, and modernism were in place, the rise of selfishness was apparently irreversible. Collier finds the '30s to have been more selfish than the '20s because movie attendance and alcohol consumption increased; the rise of the labor movement, the spirit of "doing our part" fostered by the New Deal, and the celebration of traditional folkways by once-alienated intellectuals all mean little to him. Everything, it seems, plotted to send selfishness along its upward trajectory: the prosperity of the '50s created a selfish materialism, the economic troubles of the '70s "contributed to a certain 'the hell with it' attitude which expressed itself in a mood of cynical selfishness."

Most damaging of all was the dreadful advent of television, shutting parents and children "up in a fantasy world the box has made for them" and holding them there in a "kind of twilight sleep." (No wonder then that television has "altered the nature of human consciousness" more than any invention since

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alcohol.) After screaming chapter titles such as "The End of Morality" and "The Media Over All," we get to the "Consequences of Selfishness" today—which are the breakdown of the family, the decline of public services, and the growing belief in a "constitutional right to break the law" (the primary evidence for which is that a young man once told the author it was "none of your damn business" whether or not he cleaned up after his dog).

The plight of the family and the poor are certainly serious problems, but was the nineteenth century, for all of its Victorian consensus, really happier? Collier himself writes that "the Victorian Era was the great age of the brothel; it was a time when the rapacious industrial robber barons routinely used private armies to break strikes; it was a time when corruption in government reached a peak; a time when possibilities for women were sharply constrained." Moreover, Collier is not really as concerned with abandoned children or victims of crime as he is with the generalized selfishness that afflicts us all. Even if these social problems were miraculously solved, we would still be robbed of the collective and active dimensions of life.

The reason for this, and the core of Collier's philosophy of regret, can be found in these words: "There is a significant, qualitative difference between playing a game and watching it being played; between making music and listening to it.... The one is active, the other passive; the one is an occupation for a group, or at least two people; the other an occupation for the self." By these standards, Collier believes Americans have become a pacified and solitary lot. Still, there are pockets of resistance. Sounding like a man who just stepped out of a time capsule, Collier writes that "even as late as the 1950s, and perhaps later, boys shot marbles in the spring ..." and "up to this moment girls in big cities, suburbs, and small towns play traditional sidewalk games like hopscotch and jump rope." (Indeed, they do. When Queen Elizabeth recently visited America she seemed more impressed by the jump-roping talents of inner-city youths than by anything else.)

In parceling out human life into two boxes—active group experience and passive solitary experience—Collier excludes a lot. He does not allow that private experience can be active and that group experience can be passive. But our benighted century has seen many, many passive groups, and they haven't been a pretty sight. Surely the quiescence of the lonely television viewer pales in comparison to the mass hypnotism practiced at the Nuremberg Rallies. Even within Collier's examples, moreover, there can be "active" individual experience: one *can* make music by oneself.

Collier is a prisoner of these categories because he sees modern entertainment as simply an empty transaction between a machine and an individual, a transaction completely devoid of meaning or of reference to anything outside itself. But one needn't believe in the "global village" to see some of the ways that television brings people together as well as sets them apart. Nor must one subscribe to MacLuhan's theory that television is a "cool medium," one requiring strenuous exertion to decode, to appreciate that people make sense of the tube themselves. Collier has no interest in how the realm of culture—high and low, old and new—functions as a world of meanings, as an arrangement of symbolic patterns that can reflect and shape, intensify and relax ordinary experience. He sees it only as a diversion from work and a paltry substitute for interaction with others. The highest praise that this experienced jazz historian offers of any cultural artifact is that certain genre films of the '30s "bear watching today in the view of film critics."

One wonders, indeed, what Collier would have to say about reading. Far more than watching television, reading is a solitary recreation, and one that calls for quiet attention, for at least some degree of passivity before the text. In Collier's terms, such behavior would be a sign of the breakdown of the social order. And yet it was a favorite leisure pursuit of his favorite Victorians. For all that he has to say about jump ropes and marbles, he hasn't a word to offer on books—quite an eccentricity in a man who was written some fifty of them himself.

Seeing selfishness everywhere, Collier has little hope for the future. In the 1980s, he concedes, there were "moderate reductions in the nation's intake of drugs and alcohol," but even these were due to the presumably selfish recognition that "regular use of such substances is dangerous" to one's health. Collier never explains how a personal quality such as "selfishness" can be ascribed to vast populations. He uses the term to cover a daunting range of behavior—the ebullient search for "self-liberation" carried out by Greenwich Village radicals in the early years of the century, the materialistic quest for security and comfort of middle-class families in the '50s, the communal experiments of hippies in the '60s, the self-negation of today's TV junkies, lost in their "twilight sleep." Is the needy self in search of excitement? Sleep? Artistic innovation? Consumer satisfaction? Easy sex? TV-induced oblivion? It makes no difference to Collier so long as his chapters can conclude with the right bombastic chord—"the basic unit of society was becoming the self," "the city itself was the enemy ... the victor was the self," "the new ethic of the self as a primary concern was now firmly established," "The American people voted for as much self-gratification as they could get ... and in doing so they made selfishness the *official* policy of the United States."

Generalized assaults on selfishness say little about why people might value their privacy, their right to self-expression, their self-development. Too often, the critic airily reduces all individualism to selfishness. But there is nothing inherently selfish in the notion that individuals might deliberate over the ends of life on their own. Individualism is not quite the enemy of society that its recent critics make it out to be. Rather than seeking to rupture communal bonds, individualism argues that these bonds are strengthened and enriched when they are the product of informed choice, and not of external or arbitrary authority. Yes, individualism can excuse selfishness, but so can the most rigorously collectivist ideologies, as the self-serving behavior of assorted Communist and nationalist elites throughout the world has demonstrated. Some of those recently disgraced heroes of the fight against individualism invented horrors far greater than the crimes of "selfishness." Compared with the surrender of the self to the group that the twentieth century has so often preached, the sober calculation of self-interest and the private expression of personal feeling don't look so dangerous, or so uncompassionate, after all. •

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 6*

I can assure Mr. Blumenthal that this perception *is* indeed widespread out here. Women as well as men share it. And believe me, here in Madison, few of them are "conservative"—certainly not in any ideological sense. None of them was overly awed by the Republicans on the committee or by their so widely touted aggressiveness in defense of Judge Thomas. What they were impressed by was Clarence Thomas himself, *and* the people who testified on his behalf—people whom Ms. Noonan aptly, if playfully, captured through the metaphorical vehicle of J. C. Alvarez's Maybelline. Above all, they wonder why a

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man whose character is clearly several cuts above that of most public officials became the victim of a puritanism whose hysteria was only outdone by its political selectivity.

JONATHAN BURACK
Madison, Wisconsin

Chicken-centric

To the editors:

Regarding Jonathan Rieder's rewrite of my book, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights* ("Tawana and the Professor," October 21): his biggest mistake, of many, is when he observes that this book "could" be read only as a "parody of a certain religion of academia" but then decides not to do so. While the substance is quite serious, stylistically my book *is* a parody and I explicitly say so from the first chapter onward. It parodies everything from medieval alchemical texts to Laurie Anderson. If *Alchemy* is read with Mr. Rieder's unrequited stoniness and carelessness to allusion, then of course it will sound only through the filter of the "ponderous," "precious," and "strained."

Mr. Rieder's assertion that I say "blacks ... in an astonishing concession to an old stereotype, dance with abandon" is absurd. Throughout my book, dance operates as a trope, with thinly veiled references to everything from William Butler Yeats's "dancer without a dance," to Wallace Stevens's "Dance of the Macabre Mice" in which the "dance has no name. It is a hungry dance." There are lawyer dances, shopping dances, dances for display, private dances, street dances, runaway-model dances, as well as dancing chickens, dancing rabbit ghosts, and alchemical images of the dancing bear. In all of these references, it is the chickens alone who, having no control at all, might be said to have danced with abandon.

It would be one thing if Mr. Rieder thought my book failed as tragicomedy. But for Mr. Rieder to read through the entirety and come up only with the sour reductionism of "racialist claims" as to how blacks literally dance is nothing short of stupidity. By that measure I guess I would have to plead guilty to being "bearist," "rabbitist," and outright chicken-centric, too. Mr. Rieder's reading is a perfect example of why I am so critical of those deadly conventions of scholarship that never look up to see that there might be worlds of meaning beyond the safe burrow of one's own genre—or of one's own neighborhood. And that is the point I made in *Alchemy*, over and over and over again.

PATRICIA J. WILLIAMS
Madison, Wisconsin

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Not too long ago, our Secretary of State James Baker made the astonishing comment that Israeli settlements in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") were the greatest obstacle to peace in the Middle East. Could Mr. Baker possibly be right? It's a serious accusation and it deserves examination.

What are the facts?

■ In order to gain perspective, some thumbnail history may be in order. Large numbers of Jews have been living in these territories since biblical times – without interruption. Most of the Arabs living there are in fact relative newcomers. "Palestine" is the entire area now covered by Israel, including Judea/Samaria (the so-called "West Bank") *and* what is now the Kingdom of Jordan. It originally also included the Golan Heights, which later, in an agreement between England and France, were ceded to France, and to Syria as the successor in possession. In 1922, contrary to the requirements of the League of Nations Mandate, the British severed the entire area east of the Jordan River and gave it to the Hashemites as reward for their assistance in World War I. Thus, fully 75% of Palestine, all of which under the Mandate and under the terms of the Balfour Declaration was meant to be a homeland for the Jewish people, was lost for that purpose. Only the area west of the Jordan River was left for Jewish settlement.

■ In 1947, after decades of strife between Arabs and Jews, the British decided that they had enough and announced that they would relinquish the Mandate. The United Nations stepped in and proposed a partition plan under which the country (west of the River) was to be divided into respective Arab and Jewish areas. Jerusalem was to be an internationalized city. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs refused it out of hand. In 1948, on the twice truncated territory allotted to them by the United Nations, the Jews declared their independence, and the state of Israel was born. On the same day, six Arab armies invaded the new-born state. In what can be described as an almost biblical miracle, the Jews defeated the six Arab armies. When an armistice was finally secured, however, TransJordan remained in possession of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem; Egypt remained in possession of the Gaza Strip. TransJordan promptly renamed itself Jordan.

■ Once in possession of the "West Bank" and East Jerusalem, the Jordanians promptly proceeded to expel all Jews and systematically to desecrate and to destroy most Jewish sacred places, cemeteries and houses of worship. No Jews, regardless of whether they were Israelis, Americans or citizens of any other country, were allowed into the "West Bank" or East Jerusalem, the locale of the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism. In 1967, Abdel Nasser of Egypt, joined by the same array of Arab armies that had tried to destroy Israel in 1948, launched another war against Israel "to drive the Jews into the sea" and into oblivion, once and for all. The Israelis pre-empted and utterly defeated the combined Arab might in the 6-Day War, one of the greatest military victories in history. When the dust of war settled, the Israelis had not only retained their national territory, but had repossessed (not occupied) the territories of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), the eastern part of Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the vast Sinai Peninsula.

It is clear from this abbreviated history that the Israeli claim to the "West Bank" is at least as strong as that of the Arabs. It's only by dint of constant repetition that the world has come to think of these territories as "occupied Arab land". About 100,000 Jews now live in these territories. And why shouldn't they? Why should the Arab countries and the "West Bank" be the only places in the whole wide world where Jews are not allowed to live? How can 100,000 Jews living among 700,000 Arabs be the "greatest threat to peace"? How can Secretary Baker get so exercised and consider a new settlement of a few mobile homes on some barren Judean hills as the "greatest threat to peace", when he seems to be oblivious and totally unconcerned about the unrelenting hostility of the Arab countries, the de facto incorporation of Lebanon by Syria, the Scuds and chemical weapons still remaining in Iraq, and the relentless and ominous build-up of Syria's missile forces?

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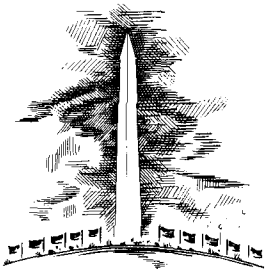
WASHINGTON DIARIST

Jack and the beansprouts

HARPERCOLLINS HAS LAUNCHED Gorbachev's *The August Coup* with considerable fanfare, but evidently no publicist felt up to the challenge of trying to turn Mrs. Gorbachev's memoir, *I Hope: Reminiscences and Reflections*, into a hot commodity. It's not hard to see why. Mikhail Sergeyevich's chapter titles may be hopelessly dry—"The Congress of People's Deputies," "The Contours of the Union"—but Raisa Maksimovna's are even more hopelessly wet: "We Were All Children Once," "The Test of Real Life," "Things I Take to Heart," etc. Still, American gossip columnists should take note: there is more to this story than post-totalitarian kitsch. Though Mrs. Gorbachev dismisses the rumors of friction between her and the former first lady of the United States ("All our feelings, worries, and anxieties were just a drop in the ocean of the hope ... felt by people throughout the world: the hope of peace and a future for the whole of mankind"), in fact the Nancy-Raisa feud lives on between the lines. The battle for moral superiority between the author of *I Hope* and the author of *My Turn* still revolves around the issue that got the two of them bristling in the first place: clothes. Mrs. Gorbachev spent the Reagan years trying to compete with her clotheshorse counterpart; pioneering in the role of high-profile first lady in the USSR, she couldn't afford to look frumpy, and she never left home without her Gold Card. For the '90s, however, she has a revisionist, Barbara Bush-inspired agenda: disdaining frills, Raisa suddenly can't say enough about her unfashionableness.

IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE BOOK Raisa keeps talking about her dresses and coats—about how few of them she has, how hard they were to come by, how unimportant they are to her. On page 58, for example: "I have never in my life felt envious because someone was wearing a dress or other adornment that was more beautiful than what I was wearing." On page 64: "Mikhail Sergeyevich earned the money needed for ... a 'wedding-dress' for me (not a proper wedding-dress—we'll put the word in inverted commas)." She's similarly self-effacing about her prenuptial attire: "Our 'wardrobe' at that time was also very modest, if the clothes that we wore year in, year out could be dignified by the title of 'wardrobe.' There is much, very much that one might say about it." And she means it. "By the way, it was a friend of my father's working in the village Soviet who helped him to buy my first coat. But we have digressed." If only we had. In fact, I think we're close to the heart of *I Hope*.

POST-PUTSCH STRESS DISORDER IS, not surprisingly, widespread in the USSR these days, and many of the victims have resorted to Western therapeutic techniques. *The August Coup* is an example of the celebrity's now standard treatment for personal traumas: the confessional memoir. (Though written before August, *I Hope* is offered in the same spirit; it's "a spontaneous and particularly personal response to what is happening around me and to the dramatic conflicts, shocks," Mrs. Gorbachev explained in a press release.) Less prominent Soviets have another recourse, Radio Liberty reported in a summary of a recent Tass story. An office for psychological consultations was set up in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses during the most recent meeting of the legislature, and lines quickly formed in the foyer. People's deputies in large numbers were "reportedly suffering from feelings of inadequacy brought on by their behavior during the putsch, or from feelings of isolation and disorientation in the new political climate." Former Party workers were also spotted visiting the psychologist. The trend could well take off—a rare case of supply meeting demand: it's not a moment too soon for the notorious Soviet psychiatric establishment to "re-tool."



COUNT ON STORMIN' NORMAN Mailer to manifest some post-publication stress disorder—which in his case is usually indistinguishable from state-of-the-art book promotion. The latest ploy is inspired: when your book comes out and receives less than a rave review in *The New York Times Book Review*, take matters into your own hands and create a full-scale controversy. Demand space in the *Book Review* to rail at your reviewer and his editor. Mailer's gripe in his open letter in the November 17 issue is, ostensibly, "fairness." He complained that it was a travesty of reviewing ethics for the *Times* to assign *Harlot's Ghost* to the famously fierce John Simon, who had panned *Marilyn*, had little admiring to say about *Armies of the Night*, and had even taken a swipe at the acting talents of Mailer's daughter. In short, Mailer made a show of holding the *Times* up to the standards of its own David Souter school of book reviewing (a critic must have no paper trail, no recorded opinions or ideas that would foreclose a judicious and balanced review). But in truth, even-handed impartiality is the last thing Mailer wants. What really galled him about Simon's review turned out to be precisely its balance—"half unfavorable, half favorable," he was forced to acknowledge, "No vintage bile!" So the *Times* in fact has nothing to apologize for, except perhaps dullness. Mailer's vintage "advertisement for himself" has now remedied that.

THE CURRENT BEST seller in our household, "Jack and the Beanstalk," is, I have been surprised to discover, the perfect story for the rapacious '80s. My memory was of a moralistic little tale about a loyal son who takes gold from a miserly giant to rescue his mother from poverty and then vanquishes the villain, who's forever threatening to broil the boy on toast and eat him. (Fee-fi-fo-fum etc.) Reading the story again (and again and again), I see that it's actually about a greedy kid who isn't satisfied with stealing the giant's hen that lays golden eggs, but keeps on climbing up the beanstalk to rob him, finally taking his golden harp and killing him when he comes in pursuit. Poor giant, I said, unable to resist moralizing. But the more far-reaching retelling staged by our local puppet theater proved that I was off on the wrong revisionist track. The show offered the perfect '90s P.C. version. All that fee-fi-fo-fum noise was nothing compared with the giant's silent crime: Jack's reason for climbing back up the beanstalk was not to steal again but to save a mute girl who was the giant's slave (a totally new addition to the story, as far as I know). And in returning for the harp, he was risking his life to restore her only means of self-expression. So much for my indictment of Jack as a sizist: instead he gets credit for waging a struggle against sexism. So, I hear, do both Beauty and the Beast in the new Disney movie. Their romance triumphs over the crude designs of a character named Gaston, the ultimate male chauvinist. Aren't there any other villains out there?

ANN HULBERT

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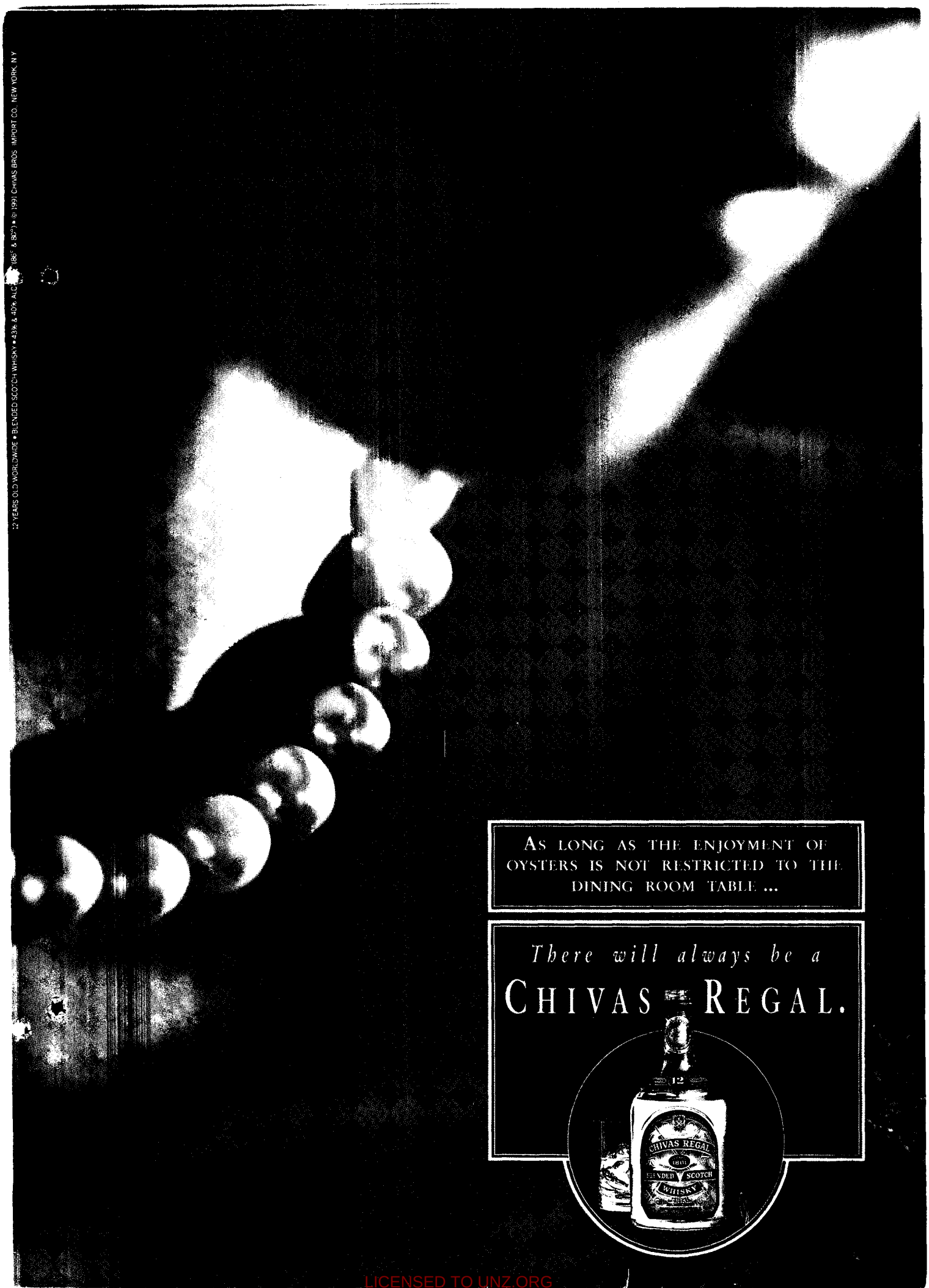
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